Col. Timothy Pickering

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A DISCOURSE

ON

Popular Education;

DELIVERED

In the Church at Princeton,

THE EVENING BEFORE THE ANNUAL COMMENCEMENT

OF THE

COLLEGE OF NEW JERSEY

September 26, 1826.

BY CHARLES FENTON MERCER.

PUBLISHED AT THE REQUEST OF THE AMERICAN WHIG AND CLIOSOPHIC SOCIETIES.

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1826.

TO THE

AMERICAN WHIG AND CLIOSOPHIC SOCIETIES.

Gentlemen,

In complying with the request contained in your flattering resolutions, of a copy for publication of the discourse which I had the honour to pronounce in your presence, by the appointment of one of your bodies, the American Whig Society, I have consumed the few intervals of uninterrupted leisure, allowed me in a long journey, not yet completed.

This will, I trust, plead my apology, as well for the delay of the manuscript, which I now forward, as for some of the imperfections of that part of the discourse, especially, which had not been previously written.

In conformity with the wishes of your committees, (by whom I had the honour of receiving copies of your resolutions,) that portion of the discourse is also transcribed, which its unforeseen length induced me to suppress in the delivery; and an Appendix is added, in pursuance of the motive which prompted my imperfect labour, that of rendering it, if possible, of some practical utility, by making it the vehicle, not of my own immature conceptions, but of topics of reflection, to those who have the ability, leisure, and inclination, to improve upon the crudest suggestions.

Allow me, Gentlemen, to congratulate you, on your harmonious co-operation, in laying the foundation of a joint annual meeting of your members, which, if it were to be attended with no other beneficent effect, would demonstrate, that the mutual kindness, which it cherishes, between two ancient and rival institutions, may unite in social fellowship and reciprocal esteem, those, who are animated by the most ardent emulation, in seeking honourabte distinction, from moral and intellectual improvement.

I am, Gentlemen,

With the sincerest respect and regard,

Your faithful friend and servant,

C. F. MERCER.

Baltimore, Md. Nov. 6, 1826.

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE AMERICAN WHIG SOCIETY, AT ITS ANNUAL MEETING, SEPT. 27, 1826.

Resolved, unanimously, That the thanks of the AMERICAN WHIG SOCIETY be given to the Hon. CHARLES FENTON MERCER, for the able and eloquent Address delivered by him, on the 26th inst.; and that he be requested to furnish a copy for publication.

Committee to communicate to Mr. Mercer the above Resolution:

WILLIAM C. ALEXANDER,
SAMUEL J. BAYARD, and } ESQS.
JOHN DAVENPORT,

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE CLIOSOPHIC SOCIETY, AT ITS ANNUAL MEETING, SEPT. 27, 1826.

Resolved, unanimously, That a committee be appointed, to present to the Hon. CHARLES FENTON MERCER, the thanks of this Society, for the able and learned Discourse delivered by him before the *American Whig and Cliosophic Societies*, and to request a copy for publication.

REV. DR. JOHN M'DOWELL,
THOMAS CHAPMAN, ESQ. and } *Committee.*
PROFESSOR MACLEAN,

A DISCOURSE

ON

POPULAR EDUCATION.

Mr. President, Venerable Guardians, Fellow Graduates, and Students of Nassau-Hall; and my respected Audience—

Were I to yield expression, to the many feelings that crowd at my heart, on entering again this hallowed temple, after the lapse of so many years, I should trespass on an indulgence which I have great need to solicit, and depress, as well as disappoint the generous confidence, that has called me from a remote abode, to address you on this day. I shall better fulfil, though most imperfectly at best, the useful purpose of the invitation I am honored in obeying, by recurring to some of the most important of those early lessons, that we gathered at the feet of our Alma Mater, and which all the experience of life has subsequently confirmed.

On an occasion, resembling, in some respects, the present, but now, long past, a devotion to our common country of which we all alike partake, prompted me to offer to you, a vindication of the then endangered security, of her *external peace;* of that gallant navy which has since borne her triumphant banner on Lake and Ocean.* The occasion and the subject are, doubtless, alike forgotten, nor have I a motive for reviving their recollection, except that they have suggested to me, the topic which I now beg leave to pre-

* A Discourse delivered at the annual Commencement, in 1800, on "The policy of maintaining a Permanent Navy." Published in Philadelphia, in 1801.

sent to you, and which involves the most effectual, if not the sole safeguard of that country from *internal danger.*

That man cannot long remain *stationary* in his moral and intellectual condition, is demonstrated by universal experience. This truth may as confidently be affirmed of his social and political, as of his personal existence. It is only the more true, because the observation is so very trite, that "Nations have their Rise and Fall."—That the mightiest empires prosper or decline under the influence of the same causes which exalt or degrade the individual man. Nor could this well be otherwise, since the most extensive communities, are but associations of men, partaking of all their infirmities, subject to all their wants, and governed by their passions, or their imperfect reason.

If resplendent virtues have sometimes appeared amidst an age of general depravity—if the names of Cato and Philopœmen shine so conspicuously on the pages of ancient history, the expiring freedom of their degenerate countries furnished the occasion, and by contrast the illustration of their glory.

It enhances the importance of the solemn admonition which this instability of human affairs teaches to nations, as well as individuals, that States which have once fallen, by corruption, become in time only more and more degraded; the analogy continuing to subsist between the individual and social condition of man throughout all the stages of his eventful history:—

> "Facilis descensus Averni:
> Sed revocare gradum superasque evadere ad auras,
> Hoc opus, hic labor est."

The path from freedom to despotism, through vice and anarchy, is a downward and beaten track, and many nations have travelled it. The return to freedom, by the same highway, has been made—never! Rome, now so mournful an

example of this truth, once proclaimed liberty to subjugated and submissive Greece, but found her incapable of enjoying the precious boon. May the heroic struggle of these modern soldiers of the cross, with a ferocious tyranny, prove more propitious to their happiness, than the proffered gratuity of their second masters!

From these brief but monitory lessons, how important to our future happiness, is the deduction which we must infer, of the necessity of vigilantly guarding our national prosperity! Heaven has not arrested for us the wheel of revolving empire, nor nature changed her laws for our continent. The bright orb which rolls his unclouded course to the West, will leave us in a few hours amidst the darkness that now wraps the oriental world. Let us, therefore, diligently watch over the sources of our national happiness, while our day spring is on high, and the moral night of our decline may be far distant. That our country is prosperous, I will not pause to demonstrate: for, however adventurous speculation, the ordinary fluctuations of commerce, or those domestic afflictions which are inseparable from humanity, may checquer here and there, with passing shadows, the bright scene around us, a patriot throb responds with gratitude to heaven, for the unexampled extent of our national felicity.

To what pre-eminent cause, then, are we to ascribe the prosperity of our country? Is it her geographical position; her fruitful soil; her varied climate; her extensive territory; her rising arts; her rich and increasing commerce; her navigation, that already whitens with its swelling canvass, every sea? her glory in arms, of which those now peaceful fields, and that classic edifice remind us; and which was so recently reflected from another element, by her triumphs over its long acknowledged sovereign?—or, ascending higher, shall we ascribe the happiness of our country, to that political revolution, of which the first ju-

bilee has just sounded its rejoicing trumpet; or to her unbounded liberty, civil and religious; or that admirable constitution of government, at once their offspring and their shield?—These, in truth, are but the accompaniments, much less than the sum; a part only of the indicia of the outward and visible signs of a prosperity, which has its prolific source, under the favour of heaven, in the intelligence and virtue of the American people. Trust me, my countrymen, this is not the language of flattery. Though it were to cherish national pride, that most pardonable weakness of humanity, if weakness it be, here would not be a proper audience; this religious temple, a suitable place; the present, a fit occasion; nor I, the orator for such a purpose.—Truth, indeed, exacts the concession that other countries, if apparently less happy, surpass our own, in many of the advantages which I have enumerated. Tropical America, for example, along with many parts of Africa, and of Southern Asia, in fertility of soil. Both France and Italy, and, indeed, the entire northern shore of the Mediterranean, in climate. Russia and Great Britain, if her foreign possessions be computed, in extent of territory;—England, singly, though but part of an European Island, in agriculture, manufactures, commerce, and navigation; while her people, our ancestors and our equals in valour, are, as their antiquity should render them, as much our superiors in political power, as they unquestionably are, in wealth and numbers.

In a spirit, therefore, equally remote from vain boasting at the contemplation of our advantages over other states, and from envy at their transient superiority, in some respects, over us, let us examine the foundation of our national happiness, for the laudable purpose of perpetuating its duration.

If the prosperity of our country rests, as it obviously does, on the broad and noble basis, which I have just announced, then does its ultimate security require the constant

application and improvement of all the means which human wisdom has invented or can devise, for preserving, and since they cannot be stationary, for augmenting the public virtue and intelligence.

These means comprehend whatever private liberality, or public zeal, individual enterprise and sagacity, or legislation, whether state or federal, have hitherto contributed towards the cultivation and diffusion of *useful knowledge.* They include its humblest, as well as its proudest instruments: embracing not only the towering College and University; but every academy and humble village school already founded, or provided for in the United States or any of their wide spread territories. They comprise every literary, benevolent, and pious society; every incorporated library company, in town or country; every collection of books, whether for public or private use; every periodical review, magazine, or fleeting newspaper, as well as the press itself, that wonder-working engine of good or evil, according to its use, or its abuse—the first of human inventions, being not only the nurse and instrument of art, genius and science, but the liberal rewarder and the most durable depository and safeguard of all their labours, inventions and discoveries.—These powerful agents summon to their aid, moreover, all those internal improvements, which cheapening, expediting, and facilitating the transmission of every species of moral, political, and social intelligence; whether by books, letters, or friendly communion, supply wings to knowledge, and winnow its healthful influence over all the dwellings and pursuits of man—guiding and quickening the operations of laborious industry and ingenious art, solacing the rest of wearied diligence; supplying with thought the vacuity of suspended action; instructing and delighting the leisure of accumulated wealth; detecting the artifices of political intrigue; confounding the schemes of profligate ambition; animating the patriot's hopes, and nerving the hero's arm.

Nor does the moral influence of knowledge end with the execution of these high behests. She visits, with comfort, the lowly habitations of neglected poverty; sits by the couch of sickness; and smooths the pillow of declining age.

Penetrating the solitude of the dungeon, she carries consolation to captivity, and penitence to guilt. Led by the voice of lamentation, she enters the house of mourning, steals from affliction its cherished sorrow; calms the perturbed, heals the wounded, and binds up the broken spirit.

Returning to society, she forms and polishes the general manners; restrains luxurious, and chastens wanton appetite; and, elevating and refining the moral sense, purifies pleasure of its grossness; represses boisterous mirth, and subdues turbulent riot and dissipation: blunts the arrow, which ridicule aims at virtue; allays the spirit of angry disputation; sustains modest worth; humbles pride and discountenances effrontery: laughs, herself, at folly, and plucking from the brow of hypocrisy its vizor, banishes both, for reformation, to solitude; imparting, in fine, by her varied moral agency, to social order, with stability and strength—harmony, grace, and beauty. But who shall presume to enumerate all the beneficent offices of knowledge,*

* Let no superficial judgment regard as illusory the beneficent moral effect here imputed to general diffusive education.

The most prevalent vice of the United States is intoxication. How many youth of bright promise—how many really amiable men of advanced age, annually fall victims to this destructive habit! Would this occur if the head of each family found in its bosom, the soothing enjoyment of intellectual converse in his hours of domestic retirement and leisure? if among his domestic circle each member could contribute something to enliven his hours of rest in the sultry mid-day heat of summer, or the long nights of winter; or, when conversation had exhausted its stores, could cheer him with agreeable narratives of biography, and histo-

or to circumscribe her boundless power! I am humbled and abashed, in thy presence, thou daughter of divinity! Yet, thou dost invite me to proceed. For, whether thou smilest on the patient labour of the solitary student, as he trims his midnight lamp to read thy lessons; or thou leadest him abroad, at early dawn, to gaze upon the charms of awakened Nature, how lovely art thou, thyself, and how glorious thy dominion! The wilderness blossoms, and the solitary place rejoices at thy presence. The traveller threads, by thy inspiration, the mazes of the gloomy forest, and discovers verdant isles and refreshing fountains, amidst the waste of the lonely desert. Thou conductest the intrepid navigator in the twilight of departed day, with vivid hope, along fields of floating ice, and the doubtful shores of unknown continents. The mountains bow their stupendous summits to thy footsteps, and earth and ocean yield to thy search, their caverned treasures. Having explored for man "this vast Globe and all that it" contains, thou lendest to him celestial wings, to visit other worlds. Sustained by thee, he traverses immensity, descries new suns and planets on the remotest verge of space, and tracing the yellow haired comet's eccentric path, through centuries of time, fixes the moment of his approach, and welcomes his return—The sun, though "in dim eclipse behind the moon,"

ry, of voyages and travels, or the lessons of more profitable knowledge extracted from the neighbouring newspaper and village library?

Would well educated youth, brought up to respect labour, after seeking, in vain, for lucrative employment in the crowded professions of law and physic, abandon themselves to this suicidal vice, rather than seek an honourable subsistence in rural and mechanical pursuits?

Would old men, of amiable and even polished manners, after a life of generous hospitality, or a manhood devoted to the public service, but uninspired by that religious hope, that brightens at approaching dissolution, sink into this Lethean gulf, because they could find nothing to interest them longer, in this world; and time had become an insupportable burthen?

no longer, "sheds disastrous twilight" on the overshadowed earth, nor "perplexes" man with dread "of change." One awful being, only, remains the object of human "fear," the object, also, of our grateful love and boundless adoration. 'Tis, for him, alone, to prescribe the limits of human knowledge, and, tempering it with divine, to teach her humble votary, that, however great may be his acquirements on earth, in heaven only he can reach their ultimate perfection.

But while we are regarding the cultivation of knowledge, as the chief, if not the only means of augmenting, or preserving the general intelligence and virtue of a whole people, we are more deeply interested in its diffusion, than in the elevation, of which it is susceptible; in its extension in breadth, than, in its height, or its profundity.

Among the means of cultivating and diffusing knowledge, that which was first in the order of our enumeration, and, in its largest import, comprehends every other, is *education;* and our present inquiry leads us to consider that species of education which is calculated for the instruction of the great body of every society.

In devising a *system* of popular education adapted to a political community, wherein no privileged orders exist, it is impossible, indeed, to regard *it*, as the sequel of my remarks will show, apart altogether, from those loftier structures of learning and science, near one of the most distinguished of which, we are now assembled. But, for my immediate purpose, I must invite my indulgent auditors, to accompany me, in imagination, from the college, to the school-house—to walk, awhile, along the foot of that lovely hill, on which, so many of you, are accustomed to stand; which Milton hath, so charmingly, described, but which, from its highest eminence, commands no prospect, so grateful to the benevolent heart, as that of national hap-

"We shall conduct you to a hill-side, laborious indeed at the first ascent, but cheerful and green as soft as easy sloping towards the south, that the hearing of the [illegible] was not more [illegible]." On Education.

piness, nor kindles a hope, so inspiring, as the desire, which such a spectacle awakens, to perpetuate its duration.

Do I proceed, too far, then, when I advance the position, that the most important end of education, in America, is the diffusion of knowledge, among the great body of the people? This truth is expressly engrafted upon the political constitutions of some of our states, and practically manifested by their laws. It resounds, every where, in our legislative halls; animates our popular meetings; embellishes the conversations of our drawing-rooms; and yet, perhaps, it is not unfrequently employed to aid some foreign purpose; or repeated simply to adorn a paragraph; or uttered and afterwards neglected in complacent contentment with its bare admission.

To this opinion, we shall be driven, by an examination of the systems of popular education, which this sentiment has, hitherto, produced. By reflecting, how slow has been their growth where they were first established; how late their introduction in some of our own commonwealths; how many of these yet remain without them; and how imperfect they are still in all: while their beneficent influence continues to be, as it has long been, so generally acknowledged, as to require some apology, for any attempt however feeble, to demonstrate their utility, or to reply to those open or latent objections, which counteract their establishment, where they are yet unknown, or are, at least, unfelt.

Passing from those very general views, which have been already suggested, of the importance of knowledge, there exist motives for its dissemination, in America, which the peculiar nature of our political institutions irresistably enforces, and the obvious progress of our society and manners admonishes us, to weigh, and to appreciate more seriously, perhaps, than we are prone to do.

If, in absolute monarchy, every subject has the deepest

interest in the character, and, consequently, in the education of the hereditary prince who is to succeed to the throne, where is the citizen of the United States, who is either so exalted, or so obscure, as not to be compelled, if he think at all, to regard the diffusion of knowledge, by popular instruction, as the primary and indispensable object of all our literary and social institutions? Throughout our country, representative governments every where prevail; and sustained by frequent elections and widely extended suffrage, render the people, the only *effective*, as they are admitted to be, the *legitimate*, as well as *nominal Sovereign*. This sovereignty is every where manifest in the origin of those governments, which, springing neither from force, nor fraud, nor accident, acknowledge no other sanction, than the common consent; profess no other end than the common happiness; and ask no other instrument, for its attainment, than fixed laws.

Law has been defined to be, "*summa ratio*," "the perfection of reason;" and such it ever should be. It has, also, been denominated "the expression of the public will," and so in America it emphatically is. How necessary, then, to instruct and enlighten the public judgment which guides that will.

If, by their Federal and State constitutions, the American people have wisely distributed and apportioned their delegated power among different agents for a common end, this transfer, regulated by prescribed limitations, and restrained by accountability to them, is, in truth, more apparent than real.

If their freedom and prosperity have been better protected against the abuse, by the division of power, this ingenious safeguard, far from dispensing with the existence of intelligence and virtue at the source of all power, only renders their necessity the more absolute and apparent. The rights, which the people have *not* delegated, are to be

guarded from usurpation by a knowledge of their nature and extent, and a just sense of their inestimable value. The depositaries of their delegated power are to be kept within the circumscribed sphere of their legitimate action, and protected from mutual encroachments on each other, by enforcing their common responsibility. The interpretation of the prescribed fundamental law is neither to narrow, nor to enlarge, by the mere force of construction, the power granted by the people to their political fiduciaries; nor is that grant to be revoked or qualified by the people themselves, but in the mode provided by that law, unless when justified by an overruling necessity, of which the people are the sole and immediate legislators, judges, and executive agents. To prevent the occurrence of a necessity so direful, all abuses are to be promptly checked in the *administration* of the law, and *its* very *liability* to abuse, if springing from a defective constitution of the government itself, and susceptible of stricter limitation, is to be corrected by conventions, deputed by the people, to alter or amend their very bond of social union.

If knowledge be requisite to a wise, faithful, and energetic administration of such a government, is not knowledge alike necessary among those who watch over such an administration?

But, in America, who constitute this administration? Who are, here, the depositaries of popular confidence? Who but the people themselves—to whom every office in their gift is open, from the lowest station that exists, to the highest that can be imagined? A people, all of whom start, from the goal of life, with an absolute equality of right; and, allowing to nature every advantage that she may claim for her peculiar favourites, regulate the course by their own usages; and award the prize of success, by their exclusive fiat. Who dares to enter upon this wide field of active competition untaught, undisciplined, and unprepared? or, if he

so venture, can hope to retire from it without disgrace? And will the people, by their own act, shut themselves out from the high career of public usefulness and honorable fame? or, having denied to themselves the opportunity of fair competition, will they sink down, into a narrow and sordid jealousy of talents, and learning, and knowledge, that detestable vice of low and grovelling ambition?

It is a truth almost too common to be repeated, that nature has scattered the seeds of genius far and wide, requiring of man but common culture to cause them to expand and flourish. *That* culture, the people of America owe it to this liberal mother, and to themselves, to give. Who knows but that in the dark mine there still remain brighter jewels, than kings have worn, or Golconda yet has furnished?—that in the "unfathomed" depths "of ocean" there are pearls, more rich than Arabia has ever lent to Georgian or Circassian beauty? And if surpassing genius is yet destined to appear on earth, where is it so likely to arise, as in this new world of teeming wonders;—where rivers connect distant zones;—lakes spread out to seas, and pour their waters down in cataracts of thunder;—where ships first moved, by fire, and warring elements, that seemed to man, in earlier ages, most opposite in nature, unite to clothe, and feed, and give him wings to fly;—a world, whose moral wonders surpass its physical and artificial!—where, to retire from power such as monarchs might well envy, has become the habit of ambition—where Washington had scarce ceased to live, when *Bolivar appeared to cheer mankind; and the only prince that still sits upon a throne, spends his imperial leisure in framing free institutions for subjects whom he has refused to rule in Europe—the degenerate sons of those intrepid sires, who first unfurled

* This hitherto merited compliment to the Colombian patriot preceded the late intelligence from South America:—for the sake of humanity may prove untrue!

the Lusitanian cross beyond Afric's southern verge, and met, unappalled, the spirit of the stormy Cape.

And if in this new world, such treasure exist, yet unexplored, in what blest region is it so likely to be discovered, as where the sun of freedom first shed his orient light? and, should he, to complete his circuit, yet westward move, his last retiring ray must linger?

When the people of any one of these United States compute how large a portion of their happiness depends on the wisdom and stability of their peculiar legislation, they must feel the deepest solicitude for the general diffusion of knowledge among themselves; but they have a like interest in the popular education of every other state of their common union. This necessarily results from the absolute equality of all the states in the less numerous but more powerful branch of their general Legislature; and their contingent parity of influence, in the exercise of the high executive function cast upon the other branch, on a failure to choose a president of the United States by the electoral colleges; that power which determines, for the period of an Olympiad if not longer, the character of an entire administration. In this view, the education of the people of Delaware, or of Rhode-Island, is of as serious importance to the prosperity of New-Jersey, as that of either of her powerful neighbours; and, as regards the whole federal power of our complex political system, the diffusion of knowledge through either of the populous states of Pennsylvania, or New-York, is even more essential to the future prosperity of every other state, than the instruction of its own citizens. How often, in the history of our national legislation, brief as it is, has the fate of the most momentous question turned upon a few votes, expressive of the sense of a bare majority of the people? Shall public credit be established, or maintained on an immutable basis? Shall foreign commerce be cherished, or suspended? The navigation which sustains it be protected or abandoned? Shall the internal trade mong the several states be

facilitated, by opening new channels of intercourse, or improving the old? Shall peace be preserved?— Insurrections quelled?—War declared? These, and many other questions, alike important, may be, and some of them have already been decided in the councils of the union, by the preponderancy of a few voices, responsive to the will of a constituent assembly of the people, and that will directed by their knowledge.

It would be a curious inquiry, and not impertinent to our present purpose, to trace the final decision of those questions to its true source, in the real or putative opinion of a small portion of the American people, by whose representatives, as arbiters between conflicting interests or prejudices, the course of our national legislation has been swayed. But I will not encroach upon the province of future history, nor seek to anticipate her impartial judgment; much less would I attempt to bring into this peaceful temple, on this sacred occasion, the present or past political dissensions of our public councils, although they furnish topics of great and vital moment, not to ourselves alone, but to all mankind. Some of these remain yet undecided, and upon their final disposal the diffusion of knowledge could not fail to exert the most propitious influence.*

If, in the improvement of the moral sense of mankind, as in the inventions of art, and the discoveries of science, all nations, however slightly connected, or widely separated, have a common interest, how deep, may I not repeat, is that solicitude, which the people of these states should cherish for the diligent culture and diffusion of useful knowledge! What interest can be imagined, superior to that of the American people in the preservation and glory of their union, involved, as they are, in the wisdom of its laws, and the purity, energy, and fidelity of their administration; all

* See Appendix, Note I.

of which, again, rest on their own intelligenee and public virtue.

But if the natural progress of society and manners, in every commercial nation, be attentively regarded, this interest will be awfully augmented.

The multiplication and diversity of human pursuits, combined with that division of labour, to which the arts and sciences are indebted for their improvement, have a direct tendency to occasion between the various classes, into which society as it advances in age is gradually distributed, not only a great disparity of leisure and knowledge, but a more dangerous inequality of wealth and comfort. Nor have positive institutions, without doing violence to human nature, hitherto succeeded any where, in long retarding this progress. It has been in some cases unintentionally accelerated, especially in modern times, by commercial jealousy, and the unnatural pursuit of an ideal and unattainable national independence.* Even the agrarian systems of the Jewish, Spartan, and Roman commonwealths, yielded, at length, to the force of this tendency of society; and the feudal tenures, which arose upon the prostrate ruins of the ancient world, and were, so long, guarded by the chivalry of modern Europe, have fallen, or are daily sinking, under its overwhelming influence.

The spirit of monarchy, sustained by the pride of ancestry, and that desire, so natural to man, to found a name that shall survive himself, have proved an ineffectual restraint upon this inclination of commerce to promote the alienation and division of estates. In vain has the aristocracy of France recently attempted to renew the right of primogeniture, which the short-lived republic demolished; and the princes and peers of England condescend to partake of the costly entertainments of the Bankers and Merchants of Lon-

* See Appendix, Note II.

don, in those ancient abodes of hospitality, which were once the seats of their ancestors.

What the genius of Aristocracy ineffectually laboured to obstruct, in Europe, that of Liberty has accelerated in America. The doctrines of entails, and the rights of primogeniture, which our forefathers brought with them across the Atlantic, along with the common law of England, fell into disuse, without a struggle, in most of the American States some time before; and, among the residue, by the mere force of that revolution which detached them from their mother country.

If this process of division, by voluntary transfer and descent, were all that enlightened legislation, prompted by the spirit of commerce and freedom, had hitherto promoted, still it is apparent, that in the lapse of time, the largest estates would be reduced to very small dimensions by the multiplication of families, and the smallest would soon become inadequate to the comfortable support of the proprietor and the proper education of his children. The leisure of the cultivator would decrease with his patrimony; his labour increase with his poverty; and the ignorance of his uneducated offspring be visited upon their posterity, until both ignorance and indigence would very widely spread, in every direction.

But that spirit of commerce which splits up estates by alienation, has, for its correlative, the spirit of gain which reunites, enlarges, and improves them. The progressive power of wealth surpasses even that of population; and the contemporary growth of both, favoured by the division of labour, and the extension of foreign and domestic commerce, occasions an inequality, both of property and knowledge, as apparent, and ultimately as fatal to the internal peace and prosperity of a nation, as any that the most ingenious and vicious legislation could possibly ordain. In its issue it exhibits society under the aspect of two opposite and

appalling extremes. For while, at the one, man is beheld advancing daily in wealth and luxurious enjoyment, at the other, he is seen descending, with accelerated steps, to poverty, want, and misery.

The dispossessed landed proprietors, the recent bankrupts in commercial speculation, and their numerous dependants, mingle with another class of persons, who begin, as this revolution commences, to appear, and, as it advances, multiply with increasing rapidity. They are the common artificers and labourers, who are sustained by capital.

As the disparity of wealth to numbers increases in the compound ratio of its own artificial accumulation, and of the progress of population, their joint operation tends very speedily to throw the physical strength and poverty, with the majority of the community, on the one side of society, and all its wealth, collected in the hands of a small minority, on the other; without erecting any adequate barrier to guard these natural foes from collision, if the one were not dependent on the other for subsistence. How liable to accidental disturbance this security of the public peace must ever remain in such a state of society, from the ordinary fluctuations of commerce, the fickleness of the seasons, and the vicissitudes of foreign war, we need not inquire; nor is it less obvious, that, although it may be disturbed by no extraordinary event, it must prove ultimately delusive, if, in the multitude, ignorant and vicious, as well as destitute and miserable, the sentiments of envy and hatred, amidst the daily ostentation of wealth by the few, mingled with the cravings of unsatisfied appetite, and the cry of hopeless misery. The tranquillity of a society so distributed and regulated, is, to want, and despair, of little moment. The one has nothing more to lose, the other nothing more to apprehend. Ambition has only to supply them with food, arms, and a leader, and the work of desolation is finished, almost as soon as it is begun, and finally falls to the earth;

and its destroyers, knowing not how to enjoy, riot on its spoils, till despotism and the sword restore the counterpoise of wealth to numbers.

That this fatal issue of a course of events, which if left to find its own corrective is obviously inevitable, may not, even while I speak, be threatening the social order of that very people, the blood of whose ancestors beats in the veins of so many of my auditors, and so many of whose institutions we have copied, and are still copying, I most fervently pray.

While in this step of my inquiry I seek to illustrate the extent and moral effect of that inequality of wealth and knowledge, to which the commercial systems of Europe and America both necessarily lead, I cannot deny to my purpose the force of an authority the most conclusive, however painful may be the exposition of national calamity. I shall be pardoned, by the kindred feeling around me, for saying, that I love America too well, not to desire her to profit by the example and the errors of Great Britain. They will be found to demonstrate, that the accumulation of wealth, so universally regarded as the sole criterion of national prosperity, if unaccompanied by the diffusion of knowledge among the great body of the community, is not only a delusive measure of general happiness, but may, and indeed *must*, lead to national calamity, misery, and ruin.

To a full portrait of all that might appertain to my purpose, in the past and present situation of Great Britain, I do not pretend, nor had I time, is it necessary, for that purpose, that I should.

There are certain prominent features, in the circumstances of every people, that serve as exponents of their actual condition. The commercial and military marine of this nation; the extent of her armed and unarmed population; her manufactures, her accumulated capital, both fixed

and moveable; her fleets, her colonies, and her revenue, constitute an array of power, the most imposing. Its concentration upon a single island, happily situated, and not exceeding in dimensions the territorial extent of the largest of those twenty-four states composing, at present, the American Union, augments, in a multiplied ratio, the promptitude and energy of the action of this vast power, on the residue of mankind. If she has not the undisputed sway of Rome, in the zenith of her glory, it is only because the rest of the world is unlike the barbarous or effeminate nations, whom Rome subdued.

If, therefore, an unparalleled accumulation of riches and power in all the forms most attracting to ordinary ambition, were a just standard of national happiness, the people of Great Britain, and especially of England, who govern the residue of this mighty empire, would be the most blessed on earth. Their present lot does indeed present the most splendid exhibition that the world has ever witnessed of the triumph of commerce in amassing *wealth*, but at the same time it is the most alarming evidence of the possible inequality of *its* distribution, and of the consequent prevalence of want, ignorance, vice, and misery.

There were returned to the British parliament in 1824, for England and Wales, but 120,000 qualified jurors out of a population which exceeded twelve and a half millions. Of the funded public debt due from the twenty-one millions of people inhabiting Great Britain and Ireland, amounting to seven hundred and thirty-seven, out of eight hundred and thirty-eight millions of pounds sterling, or to 3,275 millions of dollars, 280,000 persons are entitled to the whole, and consequently to the annually accruing interest upon it, of one hundred and fifteen and a half millions of dollars. These classes are not composed of distinct persons, since the fundholder is often a freeholder too, and they together own the far greater proportion, not only of the unfunded debt of

nearly 450 millions more, but of all the moveable property of the nation. Behold in these particulars, therefore, a part of the evidences of the overgrown wealth of the rich.

Of the number and indigence of the poor, sum up the melancholy testimony, that, at the period of the last British census, the occupants of three-fourths of all the inhabited houses in England and Wales, were unable to contribute to direct taxation :—that for a series of years, more than two-fifths of all the families who dwell in those habitations, amounting to five millions of people, were dependent for permanent or occasional relief upon the constrained charity of the residue:—that in some counties the relieved paupers comprised three-fourths of the entire population, and of the whole number of paupers provided for, more than ninety thousand families were actually in work-houses.

In the eight years next preceding this census, the committals for crime among this population mounted up from six thousand five hundred and seventy-five, to thirteen thousand one hundred and fifteen, or very nearly doubled; and in 1823, or two years after that census, the total county levy for the maintenance of jails, and houses of correction, approached in amount near a million of dollars.

From the prevalence of pauperism and crime in a country, in which, of an annual expenditure of near three hundred millions of dollars, not one cent is bestowed on public education; the state of knowledge among the great body of the community might be confidently inferred, if a yet more remarkable fact was not supplied in the extent and application of the only legal provision for the poor themselves. In addition to the preceding national expenditure, for a series of many years, an average annual sum amounting to near twenty-six millions of dollars, has been levied in the several counties of England and Wales, for the clothing and subsistence of their indigent poor, while of this fund no part whatever has been bestowed upon their instruction.

During this period the annual average of all the charitable donations from every other source to this object, has not much exceeded three hundred and thirty thousand dollars.

It is not therefore at all surprising that the number of uneducated children in England and Wales, between the ages of five and fifteen years, computing those of the relieved poor, exceeds eleven hundred and fifty thousand, while the total number cannot fall far short of two millions. *These, but for untimely deaths from accident, famine, and disease, or the fatal penalty of a bloody code of laws, would arrive at manhood untaught, and might die of age without reproof or consolation from the perusal of the oracles of God, which so much is annually expended by the same people, and so usefully too, in translating into foreign languages, and publishing to heathen lands. Amidst this scene of pauperism, ignorance, and crime, but in the absence of foreign war, or of scarcity from ungenerous seasons, in the plenitude of commercial prosperity, and after a great reduction of those taxes hitherto charged on the necessaries of life, spectacles are at this moment presented in England of human calamity more awful than the pestilence which walks unseen by day, and usually sparing the country, smites only towns and cities with death and mourning. Having filled South Britain with distress and alarm, they have extended thier awful visitation, though in less threatening forms, to hardy, laborious, and frugal Scotland.

No augmentation of mechanical power has counteracted, in the least, the dangerous consequences of this inequality of wealth and knowledge. Although the application to the arts of a single agent has superadded the effective operation of a hundred million of hands to the labour of the people of England, and diversified and cheapened the luxurious gratifications of the rich, it has not sensibly increased the leisure, nor multiplied the visible comforts of the poor.

See Appendix, Note III.

Machinery, the joint production of wealth and ingenuity, has given new employment to accumulated capital, and much enlarged its vast acquisitions Aided by the growth of numbers, it has cheapened the wages of labour more than it has added to the *enjoyments* of the labourer, by reducing *their* cost. By this combined agency, it has increased at the same moment the wealth of the rich, and the indigence of the poor. It has accumulated poverty in greater masses, aggravated its misery, and rendered it more terrific.

Let me exclude the possible suspicion that I design, by this faithful narrative, to discountenance, in any degree, the policy which seeks to accelerate our march to the goal of British prosperity, by bounties or premiums of any sort, on what is so often termed American industry. It is my desire at present, simply, to exclude any reliance whatever, for the diminution of the evils of pauperism, on the substitution, in the arts, of artificial for human labour.

In the period of a single life, the expense of pauperism in England has risen ~~to~~ a tenfold proportion, while the numbers of the people have but doubled. Although in the last twelve years, that population has continued greatly to increase in numbers, its longevity has diminished: and of those commodities, the use of which denotes the absolute or comparative comfort of the consumer, the annual consumption has remained stationary, advanced but little, or sensibly declined.

I will not long pause to demonstrate how very imperfect, as this morbid condition of society might lead us to expect, is that public sentiment in England, which, however powerful in itself, every where supplies at best but a feeble substitute for the restraints of religion and law.—Passing in silence its limited control over the morals and manners of society, the little influence which an enlightened public conscience exerts, should I not rather say, the

open corruption which its absence warrants, among the people themselves in the choice of the only responsible branch of their parliament—to say nothing of the salutary check which it withholds from that body of hereditary nobles who compose another branch of the same legislature, and from the irresponsible monarch on the throne—is too forcibly illustrated by the conduct of the late elections in that splendid, but unhappy kingdom, to escape wholly unregarded in this inquiry.

In the manly admonition of one of those country gentlemen of England, in whose retired dwellings British liberty will maintain its last firm hold:—"If political reform be attempted in this country, it should begin with the electors rather than the elected; extend to the people, as well as to their representatives."*

After this brief summary, may we not exclaim, in the simple and pathetic language of one of the sweetest poets of her sister kingdom:—

> Ill fares the land, to hastening ills a prey,
> Where wealth accumulates, and men decay.

Returning from this survey of the condition of a people to whom no American can ever look with indifference; but from whom we are too prone, perhaps, to expect pertinent examples for our imitation, I am solemnly impressed with the conviction, that, in the very soil from which springs *our* national felicity, there are already sown the seeds of future misery; and that they will not only vegetate, but arrive at fatal maturity, unless we check their growth in the germ of their existence.

We have borrowed from our great original, not only the language that we speak, the arts we practice, the fashions

* See Appendix, Note IV.

we imitate, the learning we cherish, and the greater part of the philosophy we delight to study; but, with these we have imbibed the same preference of commercial to all other pursuits; the same love of riches, and with a rapidity which astonishes ourselves, we are fast overtaking our instructors in wealth and luxury. Poverty will soon follow in the train of these acquirements; and may not vice, misery, and crime, fill up the rear? Labour will, it must become in time, and that time is not far remote, the lot of the far greater part of every American community. It must often be associated with poverty and indigence. Let us, therefore, inquire, if it be not practicable to combine so much knowledge with all the necessary employments of labour, as to check, if not to arrest this fatal progress of society?

To what extent the combination of intellectual and moral improvement with laborious occupation may be carried, without relaxing the main spring of commercial activity, the desire of gain, is a problem, in the solution of which is involved, I solemnly believe, the future happiness of our republics.

It might be regarded as an outrage on human nature, were I to strive to demonstrate that there exists no indissoluble or necessary connexion between poverty and vice, or labour and ignorance. History assures us, on the contrary, that the purest communities of the ancient and modern world, the most virtuous, intelligent, and happy, have been comparatively poor and laborious.

I need not quote from antiquity the personal examples of Cincinnatus and Fabricius; though all that I would illustrate might be ~~enforced~~ from the rank which they attained in their own age and country. Switzerland still affords, England, less than a century ago, and Scotland more recently, till her work-shops multiplied faster than her parish schools, furnished of this truth the most cheering assurance.

But why travel back to remote ages, or leave America, our yet happy country, to support the evidence of our daily observation?

It is not for the *present* that relief is asked. We seek a ~~remedy against~~ approaching ills, of which it may be here emphatically pronounced, with proverbial truth, that the prevention will prove much easier than the cure.

With that primeval curse, denounced on man's first disobedience, which early drove our fallen race from Eden, and condemned its children to labour, there was mingled heavenly mercy:—

> "From labour health; from health contentment springs;"

and not contentment alone, but knowledge, and all the fruits of liberal art. This association points to the true Alchymy—the long sought discovery of mysterious science; buried not in the deep and gloomy mine, but exposed on the bare surface of the earth; where children find it, after philosophy has contemptuously passed it by.

To that sentiment, which regards all manual labour with disgust and scorn—whether it be of Castilian or American birth; of civilized or savage parentage; the pride of misguided learning, the error of presumptuous folly, or the suggestion of pampered appetite—I need not reason, had I leisure for the task. But had I the moral pencil, I would depict its visible effects, upon those States that have felt its influence. I would contrast impoverished Spain, the broken fragment of imperial glory, with the fertile lowlands of Caledonia; these, with their neighbouring heaths, from whence the foray used to pour its predatory clans; or, travelling back, from the country of my remote progenitors to that which gave me birth—and of which I shall ever speak, as it becomes me, with all filial reverence and love, but the more for her misfortunes—I would contrast her forsaken fields, her fallen temples, and decaying edifices—not the work of

nature, who never lovelier shone than on this land—with her own cottage-covered hills and mountains, tilled by the laborious hands of hardy freemen; or, borrowing from truth impartial though stronger colouring, I would point fastidious delicacy to the green fields and spire-crowned villages of New England, where, mingled with barren rocks, swept by the piercing sea-breeze, and oft clad in wintry snows, are the works of man, discouraged by nature, and unaided, but by the providence of God. If asked how far, with these monuments of patient industry, exalted moral worth and extensive knowledge may be united, I would again reply by referring to another picture, of which this scene most forcibly reminds me.

The original sat many years ago, near that spot where I then stood. It was before the devouring flames had swept away so many of the vestiges of those we loved. I then first saw him, when, to have spoken of him as I now do, might have subjected me to the imputation I most abhor. A Roman face he had, but it spoke the cultured and gentle feelings of an American heart; for I saw the tear roll down his manly cheek as the valedictory orator of that day, the last of my happiest life, bade adieu to the venerated seat, and the companions of his past studies. Long afterwards, I was honoured with his hand. I found it hardened with labour, as he told me it had been in his early youth. It was then enfeebled with age. It was the same hand which had guided the plough in the fields of Massachusetts—which had wielded the sword in the war of American independence—the labouring axe in the forests of Pennsylvania—and that pen, in the Department of State, which so ably vindicated the insulted honour of his country, against the foul taunts of the prince of Benevento, and the aggression of misguided France.

But from this slight sketch, let it not be supposed that I expect, by any system of education, to elevate the intellec-

tual improvement of a whole people to the rank of this American Cincinnatus, or of his generous compeer in public virtue, who retired from the Senate of the United States, to take charge of the school fund of Connecticut. I desire only to evince, how very possible it is to dissolve the association, wherever it may exist, between manual labour and human degradation; that it is much easier than to sever the fatal union which subsists, wherever they are found, between indolence and poverty, idleness and ignorance, vice and misery.

I have been asked, and will suppose it possible that the question may be repeated, whether I would engage in the vain and ridiculous effort to form a nation of philosophers? If such, indeed, could be the result of an enlarged and liberal system of popular education, then I fearlessly answer in the affirmative. So far as philosophy consists in a knowledge of what it is most useful for man to learn; how best to improve the advantages which nature and the institutions of society have placed within his reach; all men *may* become philosophers, as one christian society at least has shown;—a society not more distinguished for their singularity of dress and language, than for the admirable ocial and moral economy which marks their conduct in almost every department of life;—a society, in which, I never heard of a criminal; nor saw a mendicant; nor met with an uneducated man.

But from the same source from whence this objection emanates, remarks are frequently directed against the very spirit of the age and country in which we live;—a land of civil and religious liberty; an age, emphatically, of IMPROVEMENT.

Those schools which gather for instruction on every sabbath day the village and city children from the wayward haunts of idleness and mischief, preserving innocence untainted, and dispensing, without cost, knowledge the most

useful to all who will receive it, but especially to those who can obtain it from no other source;—those benevolent and christian societies who have published, through remote and barbarous climes, to tribes and nations without a written language, and in tongues to which the art of printing was before unknown, the oracles of sacred truth;—the pious missionary, who in obedience to his master's precepts and example, forsakes his natal soil, and friends and kindred, and all that man holds dear, save "faith, hope, and charity;"—even the hitherto feeble efforts, unaided, as yet, but by a single state of this union, to rid by colonization the fairest portion of America of a part of that dire calamity, which, in a reckless hour, was brought upon our forefathers by a distant government, foreign to their true interest;*—in fine, all those evidences that man, having passed the era when an impious philosophy, usurping the name of reason, inscribed over the cemeteries of the dead, "Death is an eternal sleep," has come to the light, and kindles with the sublime hope of immortality—all are derided, as the manifestations of an uncalculating enthusiasm, or reprobated, as the suggestions and tricks of a crafty hypocrisy. Do not the authors of these taunts and denunciations forget that they are themselves the descendants of a barbarous race of men, whose history, coming after the voice of fable was hushed, is of unquestioned veracity? That those German and English ancestors, on whom they so much pride themselves, whom Tacitus depicts with his matchless pencil, though somewhat fairer in complexion, were much more ignorant than the present freedmen of Liberia? That the accomplished Britons of the present day are indebted to French and Roman missionaries for their alphabet, the far greater part of their language, their laws, their philosophy, and their religion? That no people, whose annals run back

* See Appendix, Note V.

to their remote origin, and who reached any eminence whatever in arts or science, owed their improvement to themselves alone? That the very gods of the most polished states of antiquity were foreigners? That Asia peopled Egypt; Egypt and Asia instructed Greece; Greece taught her Roman masters; Rome and Greece, all modern Europe; and the only living divinity, by revelation, the World?

There are individuals of no small influence in society, who think that popular education is not a proper subject of political government—that to regulate, by fixed laws, the instruction of youth, is to interfere with the exercise of parental authority. They suppose a coercion, which is not proposed; is unnecessary, as experience demonstrates; and is nowhere attempted in America.

A more plausible objection is grounded on the encroachments, which the expense of legislating for a system of public instruction must occasion among those who may be taxed for its support, without their consent. Although this argument is susceptible of various refutations, a conclusive reply to it, in the form which it here assumes, may be deduced from the simple suggestion, that it is applicable alike to all pecuniary exactions for the public good.

But in that system of political economy, which regards wealth as the measure of national prosperity, this argument puts on another aspect. It seeks to derive a countenance, to which however it is not entitled, from the opinions of those economists who, seeing pauperism increase, not only in despite but in consequence of every permanent legal provision for its relief, would leave individual want to voluntary charity; to its fate:—thatis, very often, to urge its way, through despair, to guilt, infamy, and death. They would consign the indigent to punishment, for the sake of example: to deter others from becoming abject, poor, and miserable; as if poverty, although accompanied by stinted pub-

lic charity, or consigned to the work-house, were not punishment enough!

But this new theory for the benefit of the poor, ingenious as it is, and possibly as true, does not warrant the attempt to extend its leading principle, from the mere sustenance of the poor to the education of their offspring—from the impolicy of any positive provision for saving the body of man from an untimely grave, to the impiety of guarding the soul, his immortal spirit from eternal ruin!

May it not be very confidently affirmed, that education would operate, if not immediately, in diminishing, ultimately, as the most powerful check upon the extension of pauperism, not only by preserving man from the thoughtless improvidence which so often leads to extreme want, but by conferring on him a species of property, the most valuable, of which no vicissitude of fortune could ever deprive him?

That knowledge is power, though varying greatly in degree with power itself, is as true of its lowest as of its highest acquisitions. The learned divine, the profound statesman, the able lawyer, the skilful physician, the enterprising merchant, the ingenious mechanic, the expert labourer, alike acknowledge this truth.

Every occupation of society has its peculiar science, simple or profound, which it may acquire from practice, or from precept and observation, but which is sooner and better learnt from a combination of all those sources of intelligence. For want of it, and of those industrious habits, with which it is usually combined, how many of the offspring of indigence in Europe annually perish in youth or manhood, who might have lived to repay in age their country with interest, for the cost of their instruction! If with the expenditure of six and twenty millions of dollars on the mere food and clothing of her poor, England has hitherto

bestowed nothing upon their education in childhood, but the pitiful sum which private charity has voluntarily contributed, her laws are indeed to blame, not for what she has profusely given, so much as for what she has cruelly withheld: not for what she has done for her poor, but for what she has, through a misapplication of her wealth, utterly neglected to do. If her enormous debt had been contracted, in whole or in part, for the purpose of disseminating useful knowledge among her people, the burthen would not have been heavier, than that which this debt now imposes on the industry that pays its annual interest: and that interest might still (I neither mean that it would nor that it ought to) have gone into the same pockets that now receive it. If her appropriation to this beneficent purpose had been begun a century ago, in the infancy of that debt, and when her poor rates did not exceed one-twelfth of their present amount, it is more than probable nay—indeed, certain, if the experience of Scotland be trusted, where the parish school has laboured under the influence of a much sterner climate and less generous soil—that not only her paupers, but her criminals, would never have approached their present number.*

At the cost of education in the *society* schools of Connecticut, a moiety of her existing poor rates would provide for the education of all the youth of the United Kingdoms.

It cannot be presumed that such an appropriation would oppress the commercial spirit, or embarrass the revenue of a nation, which has squandered so many millions on fruitless wars; and which yet remains, with many symptoms of approaching ruin, the most powerful on earth. And if the industry of Great Britain would not have been paralyzed, nor its productive power even seriously impaired, by this subtraction from her total wealth, which a system of

* See Appendix, Note VI.

national education would have occasioned, no such danger can be apprehended from similar institutions in America, whatever be the extent to which they may be carried, or however numerous their pupils may become.

The immediate and necessary effect of the wide diffusion of useful knowledge is to occasion new applicants for employment in every department of society that requires improved intelligence.—to multiply competitors in every walk of life, except mendicity; and to divide among a greater uumber of rival candidates, the profits of successful enterprise.

If such effects were accomplished by such a system of taxation as would subtract from the rich a part of their superfluous wealth, for the education of the poor, their immediate tendency would be to draw the extremes of society nearer together, and to multiply accordingly that class between them, which, neither pressed down by the heavy hand of poverty, nor lifted up by the buoyancy of overgrown wealth, fill up the middle ranks, and constitute the bone and sinew, the real strength and stay, the true "wealth of nations." Travel with me to the East, and behold them on the land and on the ocean.—We have already surveyed their well cultured fields.—Enter, with me, their comfortable and tasteful dwellings;—see what neatness and order every where pervades them.—Behold those intelligent children, each of whom, if old enough to have passed through the neighbouring school, can cheer the family circle, by reading, in turn, some amusing or instructive volume from the village library when the rain pours down too heavy for uncovered labour, or winter has suspended for awhile its operations. The father and his oldest sons feel an interest in the public welfare, of which the village newspaper, that circulates through every house, bears ample testimony. Converse with him, or wait but a moment—for knowledge is inquisitive—and he will himself address

you. You will find that he knows, thoroughly, the history of his state, and country; and will astonish you, if from any part of Europe, or from certain portions of America, by his intimate acquaintance, also, with the public character of every man, who has been, or is distinguished in their service.

Is he a farmer? Talk with him on agriculture, and he will at once unfold to you his own system of cultivation; and should it differ from his neighbours, as it well may do—for knowledge is inventive—he is capable of explaining very readily his motives for every departure that he has made from long established usage.

Is he a mechanic? He will enable you to perceive that he is acquainted with the progress of his art:—How rude it once was, and how it has, by gradual accretions, grown up to be mysterious, to those, even, who practise it, without a knowledge of its principles. Is this, do you think, superfluous knowledge? Go to the patent office, at Washington, and you will there perceive that four fifths of the useful inventions, for which America is so famed, have here sprung up. Not such only as the natural productions of the adjacent soil required, in order to fit them for the inventor's use, but such as relieve the labour of distant climates from its heaviest burthen.

Not only the fleeces of the south derive, from the inventions of the north,* cheaper instruments of manufacture, but the genius of a Whitney has saved very many thousand weary nights and toilsome days to the southern planter, and added, if wealth be the surest test of national prosperity, many millions to private income and the public

* Giles Richards, of Connecticut, was the inventor of the ingenious machine for making wool-cards. It was afterwards improved by Whittimore, of the same state. Whitney, of New-Haven, invented the cotton gin, for which the states of South Carolina and Georgia allowed him fifty thousand dollars each.

revenue. Is it extraordinary that these useful inventions should centre in the East? Who invents labour-saving machines? The man who labours. Who improves the arts? He who practises them, and perceives and suffers from their imperfections. Quicken his intellect by cultivation; teach him how to think; augment his stores of thought and powers of combination; spread the history of his art before him, and he will choose expedients for himself to practise. He will derive them sometimes, perhaps, from the suggestions of accident, as Newton did the principle of gravitation; sometimes by reason, from analogy, for all the arts are sisters, and the sciences, who followed them into being, and are but their children, become, in turn, by age, their teachers and their guides; as Homer sung from nature, before Aristotle taught the knowledge of his enchanting art.

Next follow, with me, those hardy sons of toil, from land to sea. They navigate their ships, with two-thirds of the complement of labour which England uses; that once proud mistress of the ocean, who still grasps its trident, though with more doubtful hold. Even in British harbors, as some of my auditors very well know, those ships are as readily distinguished by their peculiar structure and rigging, though motionless, as by the starry banner that often floats from their mast head. When captured in war, how many ingenious and gallant instances did those who manned them furnish of their recovery, after that flag had been struck, and they were in the hands of the foe!

The "Wealth of Nations" cannot be reckoned, as a merchant counts up his ledger. If so, at what value shall we compute the moral energy of the man, apart from his estate? Athens contained sixty thousand citizens, when, aided by the rest of Greece, she repelled the hosts of Xerxes. She had the same number when Demetrius sold them as slaves in the public market; when they had refused their

wealth to defence, and reserved it for public festivals and shows. Let your cannon be plated with silver and chased with gold, if he who points them cares not for his country's honor and his own, he will not hit the foe Behold the eye brightened by intelligence and irradiated with the thoughts of home, and of renown,—it marks the naked side of the enemy, as he rolls on the wave, and speeds the winged messenger of death.—Every shot tells, and the prize is so shattered, as to leave to the victor no reward, but fame.

And who, let me ask, ever truly loves, and labours for his country? The man for whom his country cares. Who does honor to his country? The man whom his country honors. And does not this union of ever quickening intelligence and patriotism count among the greatest riches of a state? and are they not worth the cost of early and constant cultivation?

What I tell you is history; and if other nations cannot comprehend its truth, it is not wonderful. They knew not the institutions of which it speaks. Even the common sailor, who puts to sea from the north, is an intelligent moral agent, having the impress of his country's freedom stamped upon his heart, by her liberal instruction. He goes abroad in youth, from choice; and expects, before he quits for ever his favourite element, to own some share, at least, of a vessel, as good as that in which he sails. And why not? Thousands have done so before him. He has but to practise what he learned from the wholesome discipline and instruction of the village school, worth, of itself, more than all the wealth which it enables him to acquire. Since it has taught him obedience and self-command; subjected him, in early life, to a fixed order and economy of time, and to constant restraint; repressed all his bad propensities—and few men have them not—while it cherished and expanded all the good; and, above all, added to their influence the

support, and sanction, and consolations of religion, till his virtue deriving strength from time, and stability from habit, he neither wishes nor knows how to stray from the path in which he has been nurtured. If want and misery overtake such a man, he prefers death to disgrace or crime.

After these imperfect views of some of the advantages to be derived from popular education, before I consider the structure of a system for that object, adapted to the wants and condition of our own country, it may not prove wholly unprofitable to survey, very briefly, some part at least, of what has been effected, or proposed, by other states, for the same useful and benevolent purpose.

Stopping short of the scanty lessons of antiquity, upon this interesting subject, before we consult our own experience, let us, for a few moments, glance at that of modern Europe.

Of the share which England supplies, I have, perhaps, already said *more* than enough, as I should especially regret if I supposed it could be imagined, for an instant, that I could derive ~~gratification~~ any satisfaction from surveying myself, or presenting to the view of this assembly, what cannot, indeed, be novel to many of my enlightened auditors, the consequences of the neglect of the diffusion of knowledge among her people. This neglect, on the part of her monarch and her parliament, is the more extraordinary, as the splendid metropolis of this empire annually exhibits one of the most affecting evidences of the exertion of private charity, in this sacred cause.

One fourth of the entire annual amount gratuitously bestowed on popular instruction in England, is expended on the free schools of London and its vicinity.

On an appointed day in every year, the children of all those schools, exceeding seven thousand in number, arrayed in neat uniforms, and having for each school an appropriate banner, borne by one of its pupils, are conducted by their

teachers to the great church of St. Paul's, and arranged on successive tiers of benches, that encircle for the height of many feet, and almost entirely enclose the spacious area, beneath the magnificent dome of the largest temple of religious worship erected by British piety. The children are of both sexes, and taught, with their other knowledge, to sing, with perfect concord, the same anthem.

More than twelve thousand spectators gather together, in the same temple, to behold this spectacle; and aid, by the price of their admission, the charitable fund, to which it owes its existence. In this promiscuous assembly, along with strangers from every country on the globe, are to be seen the wealthiest nobles and gentry of England, as well as the ambassadors and ministers of foreign nations. Even royalty itself, deigns to regard this scene with complacency, as well it may. For when the prayer has closed of the minister, who implores for the mixed multitude the mercy of their common Creator, the voices of the many thousand children, rescued by the hand of charity from the surrounding torrent of vice and misery, ascend in one choral hymn of praise and thankfulness to heaven for their deliverance. Beneath the lofty arches, and along the far stretched aisles of the vast and crowded edifice, the spacious dome reverberates the grateful music, on every listening ear of Infidel and Christian. The solemn stillness that pervades the thronged multitude speaks their deep emotion.

Travel Europe over, and if you have beheld this scene, you will unite in saying, that, in your wide circuit, you have never witnessed one surpassing it in moral interest. Alas! that any people should prefer vindictive to preventive justice; houses of correction to the village or city schools; jails, penitentiaries, instruments of punishment and the gibbet; the sighs, tears, and blood of their fellow men, to such a spectacle as that which I have but faintly depicted.

The state of popular education in Ireland may be inferred from the solitary fact, that of 1,750,000 children returned between the ages of five and fifteen, 1,400,000 are uninstructed. After the narrative supplied by the better condition of her dominant neighbour, the misery of that unhappy island, which, as it is "the land of the brave," so should it be "the home of the free," precludes the utility of farther comment.

Before her late union with England, her parliament provided by statute for the education of her poor; but the funds, destined for the object of this law, were perverted from their purpose. Can it be questioned, however, but that Ireland is yet within the reach of benefit, from a liberal system of general instruction? Under the operation of such a system, society in that wretched country, enlightened by knowledge and invigorated by hope, would start up from the stupifying influence of misery, as from a trance.

The desire of comfort would be added to that of mere animal existence; and, aided by religion and morals, in time prove powerful enough to restrain improvidence and vice. Men would not thoughtlessly acquire families, for the sustenance of which they have no rational hope of furnishing adequate means; and the preventive check upon excessive population would supersede in whole, or in part, the positive limitations of want and wretchedness. Such a revolution, although effected at the expense of overgrown wealth, would repay its sacrifices by augmenting its permanent security. The rich could not justly lament a diminution of that inequality of fortune, which not only threatens at present its own destruction, but which has been built in no small degree upon the obvious oppression of unequal taxation.*

It is universally known how much Scotland owes of her past and present happiness to her parish schools, by which

* See Appendix, Note VII.

education used to be diffused as widely, and dispensed as cheaply, as in the most flourishing portion of our country;* but what, when I first learnt it many years ago,† filled me with astonishment, is, that to Frederick the Great, Prussia was immediately, and a great part of Germany remotely, indebted for a system of popular instruction. That monarch, who, in writing the history of his own house, confesses that he invaded his neighbour's territory because it was unprotected, and his deceased father had left him along with ~~him~~ a replenished treasury, an army well disciplined, appointed, and equipped for war. If Silesia had to regret, that, in changing masters she buried one hundred and fifty thousand of her inhabitants, she could but acknowledge her gratitude to their destroyer, for establishing, for the benefit of the survivors, and their offspring, one of the most ingenious and efficient systems of popular education known to modern Europe. And the empress, Maria Theresa, might well think the injury repaired, which, as queen of Hungary she had sustained in the loss of an entire province of her kingdom, by receiving from her former enemy, in the example and service of the benevolent Felbiger, those mea s which she and her successor had the wisdom to employ, of diffusing useful knowledge throughout an empire.

The most striking peculiarity of this system, and the most interesting feature, next to its wide diffusion, was manifested in the care which its founder bestowed on the formation of those teachers who were to give effect to his whole design. These, when he began his benevolent task, were, in Silesia, "the village fiddlers." But he soon replaced them by candidates for their station previously instructed, not only in the knowledge that they were to teach, but in the mode of teaching it which they were required to practise.

* See Appendix, Note VIII. † See Appendix, Note IX.

Trivial

Having thus briefly adverted to the parish schools of Scotland, the schools of Prussia, and the Normal schools of Austria, I proceed to the primary schools of France, and the outlines of that extensive system of national education, of which they constituted the intended basis.

Whatever were the errors or the crimes of the French revolution, a neglect of popular instruction, so far as legislation could operate, was not of their number. To change, by the mere force of a political convulsion, the genius and character of a whole people, proved indeed as arduous as it ever is, by mere human power, to effect a sudden reformation of the temper and habits of a single individual. But, so far as the laws could exercise any influence in promoting the general diffusion of knowledge, their efficacy was early exerted, and steadily prosecuted, as long as the liberty of the people continued to be the object of their public councils.

Some of the beneficent effects of that plan of popular education which originated in the Normal schools of the third year of the republic, and was enlarged and systematized under the governments that successively followed the dissolution of the national convention, yet survive, to rescue that ill-fated struggle for human freedom from the unmerited denunciation of having produced no advantage whatever to France, or to mankind.

The Normal schools were designed not only to supply the place of those literary and scientific institutions which anarchy had subverted, but to be spread over France, and to regenerate the national character. They were so defectively constituted, as to flourish nowhere but in Paris; and were superseded the year after by another system of instruction, consisting of Primary, Central, and Special schools.

Before the revolution—with the exception of the academies founded in Paris, by Colbert, for the encouragement

of the arts and sciences, during the magnificent reign of Louis XIV., and those institutions, in the same capital, which almost immediately preceded the revolution—the chief purpose of the literary establishments of France, like that which founded the colleges and universities of the rest of Europe, had been the culture and diffusion of a knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages; objects worthy, at all times, of very high, though certainly not of exclusive regard.

The primary schools of the republic were designed to teach the living languages, and to be so multiplied and distributed, as to extend to every family in France the knowledge indispensable for all her citizens.

To these succeeded, in the order of instruction, the "central schools," of the several departments, which taught, at moderate cost, to all, and gratuitously to such youth as could not afford to pay for their instruction, the higher branches of a liberal education; and each was provided with a philosophical apparatus, a public library, a botanic garden, and a museum of natural history.

Last in order, were the special schools; and among them, those established for the public service, and the application to practical use of the knowledge most essential to the internal improvement, defence, and safety of the nation. Towards the execution of this system, but for the benefit, chiefly, of the popular branches of it, an annual appropriation was early provided, equivalent to twelve hundred thousand dollars.

Six years after its promulgation, a change was effected in this plan of education, by the consular government, which, retaining the primary schools, charged the local municipalities with the obligation of providing the apartments for the schools, and the parents or guardians of the pupils, with a contribution for their instruction, to be determined by those local authorities. In this revolution, to the "primary,"

succeeded "secondary schools," in which were taught the Latin, as well as the French language, together with the elements of geography, history, and mathematics. The Lycées last followed, for instruction in the sciences and belles lettres.

In the last, all those children were taught at the public charge, to whom the government dispensed a gratuitous education, as a reward of their parents, for rendering eminent service to their country; or of the pupils themselves, for the genius and application by which they had been already distinguished. The number of the former was limited to twenty-four hundred; the latter might extend to four thousand, and were required to comprehend pupils selected from all the departments of the republic, with reference to their respective population.

The Special schools of the original system, established by the Directory, remained unchanged, embracing the ancient College of France, which had survived the first paroxysms of the revolution. Aided by numerous academies in the metropolis, by public and private lectures on every branch of science, by numerous and splendid libraries, by models of ingenious mechanism, the national observatory, the halls and galleries of the fine arts, both ancient and modern, the extensive and diversified garden of plants, and the rich and skilfully arranged museum of natural history it completed the structure of the system of national education, provided by the French republic. The Institute of France, while it supplied the ablest professors of the Parisian schools, academies and colleges, and held its periodical lectures, constituted, of itself, the most learned assembly in the world, and crowned this vast fabric of arts, science and literature. And truly magnificent it was.

That, in its practical effects, it was not fortunate, throughout all its numerous branches, is well known. The moral sciences, politics, and political economy, which are best

cultivated in peace, were too much neglected. All that contributed to advance the military power of the nation was assiduously cherished, and never more zealously than while it supplied to the pride of conquest, amidst continual wars, the aliment of military renown. The elementary portion of this system, which was designed by its founders to elevate the character of the great body of the French people, never flourished ; and, in its most essential provision, for that object, of gratuitous instruction, was abandoned by the consular, and not restored by the imperial government.

As early as 1798, Bitaubé, the president of the National Institute, in an address to the council of five hundred, and the Council of Ancients, referring to the report of the physical and mathematical classes, in which this system of education had its origin, tells the French legislature, that "the object of the whole institute, and of the nation itself, was, that the primary schools for the instruction of youth should be thrown open, in order that the central schools should not be deprived of their firmest foundation." "You know, fellow citizens," said he, "how important it is for the public order, the maintenance of the laws, and the correction and purity of morals, that those whose fathers you are, should be early instructed, and usefully employed." "You are called on to watch" he adds, "over a garden of young plants, which are drooping, and, if not speedily revived, will fade away."

"Time," says a cotemporary professor of Denmark, the reporter of this address, who was then on a public mission to France, "will prove whether it would not redound more to the advantage of the French nation, that these patriotic views should be carried into effect, than the conquest of entire provinces."* And time, my audience, has proved it, by evidence the most unquestionable! For, what has become of the founders and finishers of this revolution?

* See Appendix, Note Y.

Had the policy of the conqueror of so many states and kingdoms, just rising into renown, when this system of national education was completed, but seconded the wishes of the Institute, France, under his auspices, might have continued the form, until her character had been moulded to sustain the genius of a republic.

No unholy alliance would have combined against a power productive only of the fruits of peace and order. Or had foreign war proved unavoidable, and fortune forsaken the standard of the man who delighted to regard himself as her favoured child, the republican hero and sage of La Grange, and a new generation of Frenchmen, regarding Napoleon as the author, not of their evanescent military glory, but of their durable happiness, would have rallied around his wavering standard, and firmly planted it again on the ramparts of Paris. A miserable populace, who sung to him hosannas in the day of his triumph, would not, amidst like anthems to his conquerors, have twice bartered away his liberty, and ultimately his life, to preserve the paintings and statutes of that metropolis, which he had adorned with so many monuments, erected to the glory of France.

Unknown to fame, Elba, his temporary prison, would have escaped the eye of the historian on the map of Europe; and St. Helena, his dungeon and his tomb, would have continued, without suspension, amidst the solitude of the ocean, the salutary office of refreshing the spice-bearing ships of India. Freedom, in the old world, would not have been doomed to experience a long and sad relapse into the arms of despotism. The opening buds, which had begun to blossom with promise, on the sunny peninsulas of southern Europe, would have escaped the fell northern blast. The cruel murder of Riego, and the unredressed wrongs of Greece, would not have consigned Spain to infamy, and all Christendom to lasting reproach.

As we pass from this cursory view of the institutions for popular instruction in Europe, to a consideration of those erected in America, it is gratifying to perceive that freedom, in the New World, has rather profited than suffered from the convulsions which shook her transatlantic dominion. They have supplied her with fresh fields for culture, and furnished to her earliest votaries, if not havens for shelter from the storm, a chart to guide them, and beacons to shun.

Though an apology may be found in the first occupations of our forefathers, and their long continued dependence on Europe, for the narrow extent of American literature and science, no adequate excuse can be offered by their descendants, for a neglect of popular education.

To the honor of our country, this excuse is not every where needed. Happily for the future progress of this branch of practical philosophy, we are already supplied, by our own experience, with the means of adapting it to our peculiar institutions, and of assuring, by an immediate manifestation of its beneficent effects, its future extension and improvement.

Among the great territorial divisions of our federal republic, New-England, and of the states of New-England, Massachusetts, is entitled to the credit of affording the first great experiment of popular education in America.

Its date is as ancient almost as her earliest settlement; following it, after an interval, in fact, of but seventeen years. Connecticut, as might have been expected, from her relation to her elder sister, proceeded in this labour, next in order of time. Vermont too recently acquired a separate existence, to put in an independent claim to the honor of early aiding this useful example. New-Hampshire cannot be reproached with obstinate delay in copying it; and Maine, so lately a part of Massachusetts, partakes of the merit of her parent state.

Rhode Island, for her numbers and territorial extent, the

richest member of the American confederacy, and the wealthiest commonwealth on earth, is the only one of this cluster of republics, which has failed to imitate the system of her neighbours. I mention this, not to her reproach; unless that be conveyed by the fact itself, and impartial justice forbids its suppression.*

The pious foundation of the common schools of New-England is manifest, in the preamble of that act of Massachusetts, by which she led the way in the American system of national instruction: and the date of that act, immediately following the legal establishment of the parish schools of Scotland, as well as the details of the subsequent legislation of Connecticut, upon the same subject, distinctly point to the source of their common origin.

It is thus that we behold religion, every where the friend of man when not abused by him, the faithful conservator of the learning of the world—during the Gothic darkness of modern Europe, becoming its steady conductress from the barren heaths of North Britain, to the forests of America.†

The very little progress of popular education, without the limits of New-England, till within a few years past, does not require our special notice in determining the relative claims of our own commonwealths to the credit of its early introduction.

In contemplating the present extent of general education in America, it is highly gratifying to be able to add the names of many other states, who have prepared the foundation, or commenced the superstructure, of systems similar to that of New-England.

Virginia and New-York, almost at the same moment, provided and set apart a "*permanent fund*" for "primary" or "common schools," as Connecticut had done very long before either, being the first state that supplied, in imi-

* See Appendix, Note XI. † See Appendix, Note XII.

tation of the example of Scotland, this important principle in hastening the diffusion of popular education.

South Carolina, Maryland, New-Jersey, and Vermont, have united, in the order of their enumeration, in providing a similar fund.*

The contributions of Pennsylvania to education of every grade, have, till her recent act of 1824, taken the shape of special donations, extending from time to time from a very early period to her several colleges, academies, and schools; on which she has, cotemporaneously with each pecuniary grant, charged upon the school receiving it, the obligation to educate gratuitously a certain number or proportion of its pupils.

A reference to the "literary" or "school funds" of the several states, apart from the provision for public schools made under the authority of law, by coercive or voluntary taxation through the agency of small communities, derives some importance from the light which their operation affords in determining on the best mode of supplying the necessary expenses of elementary instruction. Experience has demonstrated that the pecuniary aid furnished by those funds, though not indispensably necessary, is of great utility. For more than a century after Massachusetts established by law, both her "English" and her "grammar" schools, (which was as early as 1647,) formal complaints were made by her legislature of the inexecution of this law. The imposition, frequent augmentation, and continuance to this day of heavy penalties on her incorporated towns, liable to be enforced by indictment and public prosecution in her courts, for neglecting to tax themselves for the maintenance of public teachers, manifests the defective *sanction* of her system, and *its* inaptitude for general imitation. While the unexampled rapidity of the diffusion of popular

* See Appendix, Note XIII.

instruction in New-York, by an ingenious application of the revenue of her school fund, furnishes the most valuable guide for the commencement and extension of the system of public schools in every other state. Borrowed from Connecticut, and contradistinguished from the penal system of Massachusetts, it derives its efficacy from the principle of governing men by rewards rather than punishments,—a principle, which, if salutary in the regulation of the conduct of individuals, would seem to be yet more applicable, if not indispensable to the government of corporate bodies as extensive as the towns of the east; where that geographical denomination, as in the language of all those states except Pennsylvania, who employ it at all, embraces large tracts of waste and cultivated lands, as well as the villages and separate dwellings of their numerous cultivators and inhabitants.

The experience, however, which recommends the creation, and suggests the most efficient mode of appropriating such a fund, does not prescribe the source from which it shall be drawn; much less does it require the delay of elementary education, until it shall have accumulated to a large amount, as might be implied from the practice of several states.

Among those states, New-York, who has so recently employed her fund, does not any longer exclusively rely on it to supply the entire appropriation from her public treasury to her "common schools."*

Connecticut, very long before she had established any such fund, New-Hampshire, who has never provided one, and Vermont, who is still nursing hers for future use, devised, nevertheless, a more practicable and efficient system than that of Massachusetts, for supplying the necessary cost

* See Appendix, Note XIV.

of public instruction.* They set apart a certain portion of their current annual revenue for the maintenance of public schools, on the express condition that it should be apportioned according to a determined ratio among those societies, towns, or districts only, who should provide among themselves by taxation or otherwise a sum sufficient, when added to their respective portions of the distributable public revenue, to maintain for a certain period at least of each year a public school.

This condition is every where found to produce a compliance with the wishes of the legislature by whom it is ordained, and to supersede the necessity of penalties which would be offensive, if enforced, to the feelings, and must prove much more injurious, if disregarded or contemned, to the best interests of society, by occasioning a disrespect of the laws.

A permanent capital set apart for public education, however it may be obtained, if not in its origin the offspring, must be regarded in its application as the mere substitute of taxation. There is, therefore, no essential difference between the creation of such a capital, and a permanent appropriation of a part of the ordinary revenue of the state. All that is essentially necessary to perfect this provision for public schools, is, that each smaller corporation, county, town, society, or school district, shall be empowered to tax itself to the extent which may be required to defray the expense of educating all its youth; and that it be tempted to exercise this usually odious power by an adequate incentive. This incentive is found in the tender made by law to each corporation of a conditional advantage, which, if it diregard, it must entirely forfeit.

The instant a system of education founded on such a basis is begun, its diffusion is accelerated by the desire of

* See Appendix, Note XV.

every neighbourhood which beholds, to share its benefit; and this desire is quickened by the consideration that the distributable fund is the public property; supplied at the expense of the whole community entitled to share its benefit.

A better demonstration cannot be furnished of the efficiency of this simple expedient for defraying the expense of a system of popular education, than by referring to the rapid progress of that of the state of New-York. Commencing with the foundation of her "school fund" in 1812, and its nominal application by law in 1814, though, in fact, not before 1816, aided by a fund, which, when applied, yielded an annual income of but fifty thousand dollars; and which, even now, supplies, when augmented from the common revenue, but twice that amount, in the short compass of ten years from the establishment of the first school to which the fund gave birth, its beneficent operation has extended to the education of four hundred and twenty-five thousand pupils.* In effecting this noble result, it has moreover elicited from the private revenue of the people the cheerful disbursement, not only of their separate portion of the annual expenditure required in aid of the general appropriation, but of the fixed capital vested in the sites, houses, and permanent furniture of the numerous seminaries, near eight thousand in number, in which those children are instructed.

The total sum applied to the common schools of Connecticut in the last year, from her constantly augmenting school fund, was about seventy-two thousand dollars. Its effects were, that, of all her youth, comprehending eighty-five thousand between four and sixteen years of age, none were uneducated; and the cost of their instruction did not surpass an average expenditure of two dollars for each pupil.†

* See Appendix, Note XVI. † See Appendix, Note XVII.

As this sum exceeded the ratio of the expenditure of New-York, to the number of her educated youth, enough is ascertained by the experience of those states alone, to evince, that economy in its strictest signification constitutes one of the characteristic features of the New-England system of popular education.

Contrasted with the disbursements of Virginia, for the education of ~~the~~ her poor, the difference of the result is very striking. Forty-five thousand dollars are annually apportioned between her numerous counties, cities, and corporations, according to a ratio deduced from the respective white population; and the portion allotted to each county, or corporation, is placed at the disposal of commissioners annually appointed by their respective courts, and charged with the obligation of applying the sum received by each, to the education, by such schools as may be found to exist, of the children of those parents who are unable to pay for their instruction. The annual reports of the disbursements under this system, swell the cost of instruction for the whole commonwealth, to an average of near nine dollars per annum for each scholar; while the entire number of children benefited by the application of the fund, during certain portions of the last year, are but about ten thousand, being less than a moiety of the total number reported to be in a condition to require, for their education, public aid.

An analysis of the causes which conduce to the superior economy of the northern system of popular education, would lead to the developement of many other advantages which it possesses over the present system of Virginia.* Part of them may be comprehended briefly, in the proper distribution and permanent location of the several schools, the reduction of the wages, and better capacity and character of the teacher; and consequently the more equal and

* See Appendix, Note XVIII.

general diffusion of the benefit, and the improvement of the quality of the instruction designed to be dispensed to all the youth of the commonwealth.

Some peculiarities of the New-England system, merit, however, if they do not require, in conformity with the end of this discourse, more particular regard. Among these are the total abolition, in the elementary schools, of the odious distinction between the children of the opulent and of the poor, together with the simplicity and utiltiy of that distribution and organization of society, which assures to this system its certain and successful operation.

If it be one of the most salutary effects of popular instruction, to diminish the evils arising to social order from too great a disparity of wealth, it should be so dispensed as to place the commonwealth with regard to all her children, in the relation of a common mother.

A discrimination, therefore, in the same schools, between the children of different parents, which is calculated to implant in very early life, the feelings of humiliation and dependence in one class of society, and of superiority and pride in another, should be avoided as alike incompatible with the future harmony and happiness of both. And it is no more an answer to this objection, that time and necessity gradually overcome, among the poor, the natural indisposition to send their children to schools so organized, than that the same lenient effect of familiar habit, reconciles man to every other species of degradation, as it but too often does to guilt itself and all its consequences. It is one of the most beneficent effects of that education, which aims at the equal improvement of the understanding and the heart, to elevate the sentiments and character of every citizen of the commonwealth; and no distinction among its pupils should be retained in its first lessons, inconsistent with this benevolent and useful end.

A yet more powerful recommendation, however, is pre-

sented in that division of the territory of each state into townships, ~~or~~ and school districts; and that organization of society which so happily and efficiently provides for the administration of the northern system of education, wherever it prevails.

It illustrates, in the humblest office of government, if you regard the talents of the agents that it requires—in the very highest, if you consider its useful and benevolent end, the benefit resulting from the division of labour in all the employments of society, whether mechanical, scientific, or political. The restraint which this division imposes on the abuse of power, and the diminution of its incentives by lessening the attractions of power itself, are not worthy of regard in the humble offices of engaging a competent teacher; constructing a school-house, presiding at a town or district meeting, recording its proceedings, collecting its assessed taxes, superintending the studies, and inspecting the order and discipline of a district school. But it is most worthy of the highest consideration, that, by lessening the sphere in which those humble but important duties are to be performed, the chances are multiplied of having them diligently and faithfully discharged; that they are thus brought, not only within the supervision and scope of the most ordinary intellectual capacity, but of the most moderate ability to spare the time, attention, and labour, requisite to their regular execution, with no other compensation or reward of the agent, except the consciousness and the reputation of doing good. As those, however, who are annually elected by the suffrages of their neighbours, to perform these benevolent tasks within the narrow precincts of a township or school district, are often the parents, guardians, or near relatives of some of the children to be instructed, there exists a yet stronger security for their fidelity and zeal. Nor should the moral effect be disregarded, which must result from the multiplication and diffusion of these

numerous and high social obligations among men, that, while all the youth of the country are instructed, the aged are excited to watch over their progress. The laws themselves, by a new and beneficent occupation, elevate the intellect; and by a mark of public confidence, augment the honest pride and patriotism of their numerous agents. A very large community opens a field too wide and oppressive for the performance, without compensation, of these moral and political trusts. But, an entire commonwealth divided into counties, its counties subdivided into townships, and its townships into convenient school districts, conducting the periodical elections of its county, town, and district officers, by all their inhabitants who are the heads of families having a permanent abode within its bosom, presents the spectacle of so many miniature republics acting upon the maxims, imitating the practice, and imbibing the generous spirit of that larger community of freemen which encircles and protects them; of which, indeed, they are the minute wheels, moving, like the smaller portions of the most ingenius clock-work, in perfect harmony with each other, and in such accordance with the will of its maker, as to ensure the exact fulfilment of his purpose. One circle, yet smaller, remains to be added—that to which every pupil joyously returns at the close of each day's instruction, to share a parent's smile, and partake a mother's tender care.

There is, in such a scene, something so attractive, that in its contemplation the judgment surrenders its function to the heart; and all sight is lost of its vast political and moral effect upon society, in the influence which it immediately exerts over our own affections.*

Let it not be imagined that the introduction of this system, alike adapted to all the purposes of internal police,† into those states whose population is less dense than that of

* See Appendix, Note XIX. † See Appendix, Note XX.

New-England, would be at present inexpedient, or impracticable. Massachusetts did not find it premature, more than a century and a half ago, and she has, still remaining, large tracts of uninhabited country. So have not only Maine, but Vermont and New-Hampshire. It is, in truth, one of the most striking peculiarities of the organization of this system, that its administration admits of the easy extension or contraction of the sphere of its operation. The system may be offered, in its introduction, where it is now unknown, under a sanction, not coercive, but persuasive, to the separate counties, or parts of a state; to be accepted, where it is calculated to be of immediate use; where it is not, to be rejected or deferred to a future period.

To all the Atlantic states, south of Delaware, this consideration applies with peculiar force, in answer to the superficial objection to its operation at the present time, that it would be premature. But an examination of the real import and character of this objection warrants a further reply. Let it even be admitted that, in certain portions of Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina, there are large tracts of country covered by estates which supply very few children for instruction, within a district sufficiently extensive for a single school. This is the very territory which, being the property of wealthy proprietors, least needs the aid of gratuitous instruction—where the parent either sends his child from home, for his education, or, at greater cost, engages a private tutor. In all those states, there are very large tracts of well cultivated soil; and a numerous population, which are more than prepared, are actually suffering for want of facilities of education. If objected, that the lowland country, bordering on the navigable rivers, along the banks of which these large estates are spread, should not contribute to sustain those upland schools, which its youth do not frequent;—the objection may be met by an argument, also founded on the unequal operation of mo-

tal and physical causes upon different portions of the same country. When war and invasion threaten, and hostile fleets blockade the entrance of those defenceless lowland rivers, shall the inhabitants of the mountains say to those of the sea-coast, Fight your own battles? We are safe—Defend yourselves.

In that education which widely diffuses useful knowledge, the whole community have a common interest, as they have in the common defence of a common country, against a common enemy.

But every objection that can be urged to the expense of a system of elementary instruction, must find a conclusive answer in that experience which demonstrates that the total expenditure which is required for the education of all the youth of a country, is found to fall far short of the actual cost of instructing in the ordinary schools the children of those parents who can afford to defray the expense of their education. And surely the sons of opulence will not complain that the children of poverty are taught at their expense, when, educated themselves at the same schools, they perceive that the total expense of their own instruction has been greatly reduced by a general system of popular education.

In closing this survey of the American system of national education, it yet remains to consider the extent of the knowledge which it is designed to impart, and the ages which it admits to the benefit of instruction.

Massachusetts, the first, as we have seen, to introduce it, cotemporaneously required of her towns the erection of a "Grammar," and an "English school," limiting the obligation to provide the first, to such towns as contained not less than a hundred, and extending the last to every town that contained not less than fifty families. Of those which comprehended five hundred, she required two schools of each description.

Her grammar schools were expressly designed "to fit her youth for the university," which she had already erected: and no pupil was allowed to enter one of them, without permission from the selectmen of his town, unless he could "read and write." The instruction of her English schools was, at first, confined to these humble offices, to which were added at a subsequent period, "arithmetic and orthography." The system of Massachusetts is that also of Maine.

New-Hampshire entitles her district seminaries, "English schools," and imposes on them the legal obligation of teaching "the English language, reading, writing, English grammar, arithmetic, geography, and such other branches of education, as," to use the language of her laws, "it may be necessary to teach in an English school."

Vermont prescribes for the course of instruction in her "common schools," "reading, writing and arithmetic."

Connecticut simply imposes on each of her school societies, as a condition on which it shall be allowed to participate in any share of her annually distributed revenue, whether derived from her school fund, or the appropriated fifth of her assessed taxes, that the society shall establish and maintain for a certain period, at least, of each year, "a school," for the instruction of its youth. But she further authorizes any school society, with the consent of a majority of two-thirds of its inhabitants qualified by law to vote, to institute "a school of higher order" for the common benefit, in which shall be taught, "English grammar, composition, geography, and the learned languages." And, in the event of the establishment of such a school, she apportions the share of the school fund allotted to the several districts of the society, according to an equitable ratio, between the common district schools and the society school of higher order.

New-York expressly provides, as Connecticut, for

nothing more than the establishment and support of "a school," during a certain period of each year, and her laws are silent as to the course of its instruction, except that an authority to prescribe it is vested in the superintendent of her "common schools." She limits, however, the extent of the power, vested in her school districts, of voluntary taxation, to the extent of raising twice the sum allotted to the district from her distributable school fund.

The references, in the laws of the several states to the ages of their children, except in the late act of Pennsylvania, is designed, simply, to fix an equitable rule of apportionment for the distributable part of their respective school funds. In the Pennsylvania act of 1824, the gratuitous instruction which it proposes to disseminate, is limited to pupils between the ages of six and fourteen.* In Massachusetts, where there is no distributable school fund, as in New-Hampshire, the laws are silent as to the ages of admission into their common schools. A rational being should be allowed the benefit of instruction, where practicable, without serious public inconvenience, at any age at which he may desire to enjoy it; and, accordingly, in the last annual report of the number of pupils received in the common schools of New-York, the number instructed exceeds by thirty thousand the portion of the entire population between the reported ages of reference, that is, by a ratio of more than eight per cent.

The very partial execution of the late acts of Pennsylvania and New-Jersey, the recent origin of that of Maryland, relative to common schools, and the absence of precise information with respect to the character and operation of the system devised for the same end, by South Carolina, denies to me the means of extending further this survey of the popular education of the Atlantic states.

I am not aware that Delaware, any more than Rhode Island—that North Carolina or Georgia has ever passed an act with a view to this object.

* Note XXI.

To the west, Kentucky and Tennessee have, within late years, directed their attention to the higher branches of education, and the spires of their universities now rise above those primeval forests, in which, very little more than half a century ago, the untutored Indian, the panther, the bear, and the wolf, maintained a savage sway, disputed only between themselves.

Among the greater part of those states more recently admitted into the Union, an ample foundation has been laid for the future instruction of their people, by the wisdom and munificence of the national government: and Ohio, constituting in her recent origin, her almost miraculous growth, and her present improvement in useful and liberal arts, the noblest monument of American enterprise and industry, has already begun to rear a literary superstructure, on this federal basis, which will, at no distant period, reflect equal honor upon herself, and the states from which she sprung.

After this imperfect history of the origin, progress, cost, administration and extent of the popular education of the United States, but especially of New-England; and New-York, who has so judiciously and successfully copied the institutions of her northern sisters; the inquiry naturally arises, whether this system is susceptible of improvement.

The diversities among those states, in their past legislation, would render this at least probable; while it suggests to each state the expediency of an attentive examination of what its neighbours have actually accomplished, or attempted, with a view to form a more perfect system of the materials already supplied by the experience of our own country. But there are other reasons for entertaining the belief, if not for confidently affirming, that the American system is yet defective; and that it is capable of melioration without launching upon untried experiment, either by referring to examples abroad, or availing ourselves of the suggestions forced upon us by those which are nearer home.

Investigation may manifest that we have advantages to gain, errors to correct, and evils to shun, in the extension of the American system, some of which, it is hoped, have been already partially suggested; and others, with the continued indulgence of my audience, I will endeavour to present, with the highest deference to the judgment of those practical statesmen whose path it has been my highest ambition to explore, as it will be, to endeavour to extend their cherished purpose, that of preserving and advancing the prosperity of our common country.

From Massachusetts, the returns of her educated pupils are so incomplete, as to render imperfect any estimate of the expense attending the popular education of that state; and even those of Connecticut do not furnish an exact enumeration of the total number taught at her schools.

New-York is the only state whose system of common schools subsists in so perfect a form in her statute book, as to admit of its easy comprehension and imitation, without investigating her antecedent laws, or the condition of her society and manners. Its recent origin has assured to it this advantage in the estimation of all, who may not be disposed to look beyond the respective codes of the several states who have legislated on this subject, in order to provide a system for their own use. New-York is, also, the only commonwealth which appears to have established a central executive power, charged with the special duty of supervising the administration of her school system, in all its parts. His authority is so great, however, his duties so numerous and diversified, as to suggest a rational doubt whether the management of her school fund, and of all the fiscal concerns of her system, had not better be confided to a distinct authority from that to which she looks for regulating and supervising its intellectual and moral department.

In the plan of education submitted to the legislature of Virginia, in 1816, and approved by its popular branch,

a "*Board of Public Instruction*" was provided, for this latter purpose; and the care of her "Literary Fund," was left, as before, with the "President and Directors," to whom it had been confided in 1812; to be nurtured and appropriated, from time to time, as the General Assembly might ordain. The Board of Public Instruction, elected annually from various portions of the commonweal h, by the legislature, was designed to provide, under the sanction of its authority, and subject to its annual revision, the objects and modes of instruction, and the discipline to be establi-h-ed and maintained in the "University of Virginia," and the several "Colleges, Academies, and Primary Schools," for the foundation and construction of wnich, a prior resolution of both branches of the legislature had provided adequate resources.*

As a consequence of this seeming defect in the system of New-York, which is more strikingly manifested every where else, there is in no state, at present, any authority erected, competent, even were it empowered, to secure some of the most important advantages of a system of widely diffused popular instruction;—as for example, improvements in the course, discipline, and extent of the common education, and constantly increasing economy in all its necessary expenditures Pursuing this train of thought, might not uniformity of instruction be carried so far, as to require that the same books be used in all the schools designed for the same grade of instruction; and adequate provision be made for their printing and distribution on the cheapest terms?

The inspectors of a town are required to visit all the schools of the districts which it embraces; but there are no common inspectors for a county, much less for the entire state, or any considerable portion of its territory, or number

* See Appendix, Note XVIII.

of its schools. No adequate provision can be supposed to be made, therefore, even for the uniform use and pronunciation of the common language of the country; nor any safeguard erected against those provincial phrases and dialects, which, as the population of a state becomes more and more fixed to the soil, and gathered here and there in detached masses, having little personal intercourse with each other, are likely to take root in the language of the people; and which are known to become, when too deeply planted to be eradicated, the source and channel of local prejudices and animosities.*

Many of these defects, if they may be so regarded, would be remedied in whole, or in part, by supplying another of more serious magnitude, which it is confidently believed extends at the present moment throughout the whole system of American popular education—the want of an adequate supply of competent instructors.

We have seen that in the system which Felbiger established in Silesia, under the auspices of Frederick William, preceptors were educated for their peculiar province, before they were allowed to enter upon its duties.

The revolution, which checked the employment of British capital in American commerce, obstructed in like manner, the source from whence the southern states at least derived, prior to that event, the greater part of their public and private teachers.

Massachusetts, indeed, prohibited by law the employment of foreign instructors in her schools, at a period when Virginia and the states to the south of her territory had scarcely any others, except what they drew from the East.

Among the former, however, were then to be found, for very obvious reasons, the best scholars, and ablest teachers, if not always the best men. The broad pronunciation to

* See Appendix, Note XIX.

the South, of the first letter of the alphabet, indicates how many of those were supplied by North Britain; then, as now, far in advance of the southern part of that island, in popular, if not in classical and scientific education.

This valuable class of men, for to us they were invaluable, made the education of youth the only business and pursuit of their lives.

Since we have been thrown upon our own resources, and those of our sister states, for a supply of teachers, classical learning, and domestic education have both declined. The chief cause of this misfortune, is, that the art of teaching, respectable as it is, has become in most instances a temporary pursuit, regarded as but the mere avenue to some other; a by-path, into which the American scholar turns immediately after he has quitted the course of his university or college, until he is prepared to travel the beaten high road to literary distinction and wealth, in some one of the learned professions.

It would be indeed extraordinary, if very young men, however well educated themselves, should prove at once as capable instructors of youth as their seniors, whose passions age had moderated; whose knowledge continued application had enlarged, and to whom experience had taught skill in the art which they both professed and practised.

The absence of competent instructors for the multiplied schools of a system of education as expanded as the American territory, must be long very sensibly felt to the North, as well as to the South; and to the West also, whose literary institutions will shortly begin to ripen into maturity, under the invigorating aid afforded them by the general government

The whole country is, therefore, deeply interested in the adaptation of the northern system of classical as well as popular education to the formation and improvement of this valauble class of men. Their number will undoubtedly

increase with the demand for their services; but the quality of those services is not likely, while that demand is so great compared with the means of supplying it, to improve with their multiplication. It well merits serious regard, therefore, how that quality may be improved, if practicable, by defraying a part at least of the necessary expense of its production.

If learning be cherished in our universities and colleges, by fellowship and scholarships, and those institutions for the higher branches of knowledge continue to derive from their own bosom their ablest professors, let similar appendages be attached as supernumerary tutors to our several colleges; or ushers, assistants, or monitors, to our numerous academies or secondary schools; in order, more effectually, to supply the want of competent teachers in the schools of primary or elementary instruction.

As, in the system submitted to the legislature of Virginia, more than ten years ago, let the materials for forming them be chosen in imitation of the policy of one of the provisions of the national system of France, from the most distinguished pupils of the primary schools; under an obligation, however, on their part, sanctioned by the approbation of their parents or guardians, and recognised and confirmed by law, that the gratuitous instruction of the selected candidates for the office of teacher, shall be repaid to society when their course of preparatory education is completed, by their undertaking for a fixed, but liberal compensation, to instruct their successors. And if those means still prove insufficient, let schools be expressly formed like those which Felbiger established in Silesia, for the education of teachers.—If, indeed, the monitorial instruction of our Lancaster schools do not furnish the best imaginable mode of creating valuable instructors.

By such provisions, as a temporary adjunct to a general system of graduated instruction, superior aptitude, skill, and

knowledge, might be made to pervade all the departments of that profession, which should be regarded as the most honourable of all the liberal pursuits of man, as it is by far the most important to his present and future happiness. Instead of being often left to youth and inexperience, it would become the object of the ambition of manhood, and the ornament of age.

That ancient and respectable state, which had the honour of leading the way in the introduction of the American system of popular instruction; who not only forbid the employment of foreign instructors in all her schools, but much earlier inhibited her own citizens from teaching without a license, may it not be hoped, will extend her patriotic efforts to multiply and improve these indigenous teachers, on whom she exclusively relies to supply the obvious imperfections of her elementary schools, and leave those states who have been so tardy in following her footsteps, without any further apology for their protracted delay.

That the system of common schools, in New-England, is susceptible of other specific improvements, a further examination of their actual condition, in reference to their avowed purpose, might perhaps demonstrate; though every candid inquirer must readily acknowledge how much easier is the task of pointing out the defects of existing institutions, than of suggesting for them adequate remedies. These, to answer their intended purpose, when applied to social and political establishments, must be in accordance with the prevailing manners and habits of thinking and acting among those whom they are designed to benefit; of which the experienced statesmen of that happy portion of our prosperous country, are doubtless the best judges. They, as well as my enlightened and indulgent audience, will find in the motive which has prompted my review of their past labours, an apology for the presumption which it might otherwise seem to indicate.

I ardently wish that we could offer, from the south, an adequate return for the benefit which our whole country may be expected to derive, from the improvement which the more matured institutions of the north must, ere long, reflect on this branch of experimental moral philosophy. With a soil rendering to labour a more liberal return, a sun that more speedily ripens, and a shorter winter to consume its fruits, this portion of our Union will not always yield the palm of honour, in the liberal field of competition which we are invited to enter, by so many powerful appeals to interest, duty, and humanity.

The greatest improvement of which popular education is susceptible, would consist in an extension, to the greatest practical limits, of the knowledge, and industry, and virtue, which the elementary schools can disseminate.

A preparatory step to this, will be the introduction of better teachers and improved methods of instruction; but its establishment supposes something more: an enlargement of the purposes of this species of education.

The vast importance which I cannot but attach to an enlargement of the system of popular instruction in America, will, I trust, plead my apology for trespassing yet longer on your indulgence, by a further developement of that scheme of National education, which, throughout this discourse, I have had steadily in view, and of which it has been my immediate purpose to supply the foundation.

Education, like all other arts, has its principles founded in its own nature, which prescribe its form, and regulate its practice. It terminates, if at all, only with the life of its pupil; and wherever it may end, it begins its useful labour before the steps of infancy can reach the school-house path. Its first lessons are received on that bosom which lulls the infant's cares to rest; in the cradle that rocks the infant's slumbers. He first learns to lisp a mother's tongue, and

catches from her delighted eyes the first ray of human love. This then is the first and universal school of man, civilized or savage; and most important is it to his future happiness, that his first teacher should be herself instructed. For here the temper receives its first impression, and the character takes that early hue, so apt to colour all the rest of life.

If feeling were our purpose, how could we loiter here, or travel back beyond the bounds of memory itself, to bless the hand that smoothed our infant brow—the voice that hush d our infant cries! But my task urges me to proceed. Among the poor, labour early arrests this parental education, and limits it not only to a short duration, but to very narrow bounds. The instruction in letters, which follows, if at all, whatever be its form, is that which is usually, if not exclusively, denominated education. Its end is both personal, and social. It has reference to time present, and to come; and is, therefore, both civil and religious, for the being who is its object, has an existence not temporal merely, but eternal.

The personal end of education can be completely attained, only by the utmost practicable improvement of every faculty, bodily and mental, of its subject. Its social purpose presupposes an attention to the former, but superadds the labour of fitting its pupil for all the duties of society in this life. Its religious end is to prepare him for the life to come; but, as from the anticipation of such a life the duties of this derive their most powerful sanction, and this world its chief value, every judicious scheme of instruction, and, consequently popular education itself, embraces all these objects.

Being an experimental science, to what extent the improvement of any branch of it can be carried, it must be left to experience to determine. The forms under which it has appeared, whether of schools, academies, colleges, or

universities, are ascribable to its objects. They should be severally regarded as the means of acquiring knowledge, rather than as conferring it; as instituted to teach their pupils how best to exercise their various faculties; as the beginning, not the end of their improvement, since that terminates but with life itself.

The elementary schools should supply those means of intellectual and moral culture, of which no member of society should be destitute; and they should be so multiplied and distributed, as to be within the reach of every citizen. Their instruction should begin where that of the universal school of the *parent* ends.

The instruction of the academies should commence *precisely* where that of the primary schools has ceased. The grade and object of their tuition, as well as their total number, must depend on the state of society; and should be calculated to urge its further progress in improvement.

The colleges, succeeding the academies, should accommodate their course of study to the advances already made by the pupils of the academy; and fit their scholars for entering on the study of the learned professions, and of the arts and sciences in all their higher branches.

An university at the head of each system of education, should adapt its instruction to the natural and easy extension of the collegiate course, prepare its youth for the practice of the liberal professions which they have respectively chosen; and be capable of teaching, moreover, all that man can learn in the existing state of human knowledge, whatever be his intended occupation; and whether he design to enter on the theatre of active life, or to devote the residue of his days to the culture and pursuit of science. To adjust the several parts of this system to each other, it should have its organization and connexion prescribed, from its commencement to its termination, by law. Even the various edifices which its operation requires,

should have their distribution, their structure, and their appendages of every sort adapted to their intended government, discipline, and end. Over all, a competent authority should preside, vested in a board judiciously selected, and rendered as permanent as a just responsibility to the legislature would sanction. It should be charged with the duty of inspecting, supervising, and enforcing the execution of the entire system of education, in conformity with fixed rules suggested, and from time to time corrected by experience.

In a government founded on free principles, the popular quality at the foundation of the whole system, should pervade alike its entire superstructure; for the genius which its elementary instruction may chance to develope, should be allowed to partake of the incentive of literary and moral excellence, which its course of progressive improvement opens to the human mind. In its origin, such a system might seem too extended for immediate use, in a state of sparse population, or of limited dimensions. Its elementary schools would be at first, such, in fact, as we now see in our country villages: its academies, but grammar schools; its colleges, but academies; and its university, but a college to fit its youth for those schools of law, medicine, or divinity, separately scattered over the surface of the state. But, in time, each department or member of this system would rise to its just elevation in the graduated scale, of which it constituted an essential part. The elementary schools, the basis of the whole, will then begin to encroach on the province of the academy; the academy, on that of the college; and the college, on that of the university. In the interim, our present inquiry naturally leads to an investigation of the means of accelerating the first step in this march of intellectual improvement, by far the most interesting, the extension of the instruction of the primary schools.

Intellectual and moral worth constitute in America our only nobility; and this high distinction is placed by the laws, and should be brought in fact, within the reach of every citizen.

Where distinct ranks exist in society, it may be plausibly objected to the intellectual improvement of the lower classes of the community, that it will invert the public sentiment, or impose on the privileged orders the necessity of proportional exertion to protect themselves from the scorn of their inferiors. But the equality on which our institutions are founded, cannot be too intimately interwoven in the habits of thinking among our youth; and it is obvious that it would be greatly promoted by their continuance together, for the longest possible period, in the same schools of juvenile instruction: to sit upon the same forms; engage in the same competitions; partake of the same recreations and amusements, and pursue the same studies, in connexion with each other; under the same discipline, and in obedience to the same authority.

To render this practicable for a considerable period, an additional expense, it is true, must be incurred in providing suitable instructors for the primary schools. But their studies on the other hand, would approximate nearer to those of the college, if they did not supersede altogether the intermediate instruction of the academy.

One advantage of the primary schools, favouring not only their economy, but the moral improvement which they dispense, is, that their pupils reside under the paternal roof, and experience, in the appropriate and peculiar nursery of the best affections of the heart, the benefit of a parent's watchful vigilance. If the extension of the objects of their studies served only to abridge the academic or collegiate course, in saving the expense of his subsistence and accommodation abroad, and improving the moral principles of his child, each parent would be amply repaid the addi-

tional cost of the prolonged elementary instruction; and the poorest members of society would be let in to a share of this advantage, without sensibly increasing its burthen upon the rich.

Orthography and drawing, geography and history, composition, the elements of mathematics, mechanics, chemistry, and botany, so far as they appertain to agriculture and the arts, along with the higher branches of arithmetic and algebra, added to the present instruction of the primary schools, would accomplish this desirable purpose. With this experiment, might be embraced another, calculated, if successful, (and of its success there can scarcely remain a doubt,) to save to the entire community a subsequent waste of time and expense. In lieu of those childish games and amusements, which answer at present no other useful purpose than that of healthful exercise, military instruction might e early introduced, and continued during the period of youth, so as to supersede its necessity at a more advanced age, and to save all the mischief arising from an attendance on those musters, which, except in large towns and cities, serve no other ostensible purpose than to waste the time, and impair the morals of the people.—That, from these two sources, a sum might be saved, sufficient to defray the cost of the proposed extension of the elementary instruction of youth in America, can scarcely be questioned, if reference be had to the number of days every where expended on militia duty; the amount of fines annually levied on delinquents, and the period consumed in the academy, from home, before the pupils are fitted for a collegiate course, which is usually deferred to the Sophomore, or to the Junior year.* If these suggestions seem to incline to abstract speculation, let it be repeated, that

* See Appendix, Note XXII.

education, after all, is a branch of experimental philosophy, with this difference from political government— another branch of the same science—that speculation in the one does not hazard, as it has often done in the other, the peace of society. The maxims at the foundation of our political institutions, once speculative, have now become practical; let the education which we have ever said that we deemed essential to their perpetuity, be submitted to the same test.

None of the ideas which I have presumed to suggest, in relation to this highly important subject, lay any claim to originality. They are, in truth, neither speculative, nor novel, as I have laboured to demonstrate, by carefully pointing to the sources, foreign and domestic, from which they are drawn.

In regarding the public funds, from which the expense of a system of popular education in America should be derived, I have throughout looked to the revenue of the several states rather than to that of the Union. It is from no doubt of the power of the general government to supply to the states, either in land, as has been already done, or in money, as it is now proposed to do, the pecuniary aid required to give effect to such a system. It has been contended, indeed, that the federal government has no legitimate authority to aid the progress of knowledge and science, in America, by establishing a national University, or any of its natural and appropriate appendages, even in that territory, over which the constitution expressly gives to it exclusive legislation. But while I cannot concur in a doctrine so repulsive to the letter, as well as to the spirit of that instrument, I witness its support by others, with less regret, because I believe that the most essential end of education, in America, can be as effectually accomplished by state, as by federal legislation. The light, which more

than twenty systems, operating at the same time, will shed upon this subject, regarding it as one yet open to experiment, will be attended with advantages that should not be disregarded, and which may be turned to profitable use. While in its continued support, taxation to a certain extent, by keeping alive the public vigilance, would be a great if not indispensable advantage.

But, I should be unmindful of one of the most honourable manifestations of the wisdom of our federal legislation, if I here omitted to notice the success which has attended one branch of American instruction, purely popular, if regard be had to the spring from which it emanates, the revenue of the whole people; or its pupils, since they are selected, with a view to their own merit, and distributed among the several states, in exact proportion to their relative numbers; I mean that military school, to which the army now looks for a constant and regular supply of military science, and which has been rendered, of late, subservient to another branch of our national defence; in exploring channels of future intercourse among the states, by which the wealth, resources, and strength of the entire union may be, hereafter, promptly combined, for the protection and safety of its several parts: a national school distinguished alike for the morality, order, discipline, and improvement of its pupils; and which owes its immediate existence to the author of the declaration of that Independence which it is, itself, calculated to aid in perpetuating.

But while a foundation has been thus wisely laid, for the patriotism as well as the efficiency of our army, are we not called on to express our deep regret at the unfortunate delay, which has so long retarded the extension of the public care to another corps, entitled, by its past exploits and the prospect of its future usefulness, to at least equal counte-

nance and regard from the National Legislature? I mean the midshipmen, that nursery of our gallant navy.

Ye mothers of America, mingle your complaints with ours, that ye yield the persons of your children to the defence of the nation at an age when their hearts are scarcely weaned from the nurture of your unfailing tenderness, and that nation, after accepting a surrender of your sacred trust, exercises over its objects less than a stepdame's care!

If protected, by the providence of God, from wreck and tempest, while on the boisterous deep, what shall save them on shore, from dangers more fell than either, in the ports which they visit abroad, or in which they remain, on each return to their native country?

Setting aside all reference to moral culture, can it be expected that our navy will retain its high character, if we totally neglect the education of those who are destined hereafter to lead it into battle—and who even in peace will be required to conduct its squadrons, under discretionary orders, on distant service, upon remote seas, beyond the advice and control of the wisdom which might restrain their rashness, or supply their defective knowledge in matters of the highest importance to the public welfare? If the American navy has hitherto earned nought but honour, and our neglect be its only reproach, let its merit no longer constitute our silent apology, but more loudly plead for our active regard.

In the special schools of France, the same education was given to all the youth destined for the military defence of the country, until they arrived at an age, to require distinct courses of instruction, and to choose their several destinations, to the public service, by land or sea. They then entered upon separate paths of study; but even then, the future profession of each pupil was left to the bias of his natural genius.*

* See Appendix Note XXIII.

In this respect for the inclination of each pupil, the public interest, which he was educated to subserve, was most effectually promoted. He entered with zeal, into the civil, miltary, or naval service of a country, at whose expense he had been taught—to aid, by the science which he had acquired in schools of practice as well as theory, the structure of public roads, bridges, edifices, and canals, or the working of the public mines, if he preferred the occupation of peace to that of war: or, if the latter was his choice, he found the indulgence of his wishes in some one of the naval or military branches of the public defence.

If any of these objects be without the pale of the lawful authority of the government of the United States, and cannot, therefore, be provided for at the academy of West Point, a sufficient number of them are included within it, to warrant the extension of that institution. It would thus be rendered capable of supplying many of those moral and political advantages, which prompted the earnest recommendation to Congress of a national University, by that illustrious man, who, while he lived, was in peace, as in war, first in the love, as he now continues, and will ever remain, first in the memory of the American people.

Animated by the desire to render of some utility the task with which I have been honored by your appointment, I have bestowed upon the topic that I selected for this discourse, all the attention which a life divided among many cares, would enable me to withdraw from other very urgent duties. I am sensible of the many imperfections of that, which instead of being an oration, is a treatise; that it has been diffusive, where it ought to have been condensed; and that its range is already too extensive, for the reasonable compass of a public address. And yet I feel that I have not done.

When I turn to that venerable edifice, this sentiment is irresistibly confirmed—for I behold there some of the me-

morials of the far happiest years of a more than half spent life, and I see near me, in this assembly, many more. Along with them I behold the chief magistrate, and may I not hope, some of the members of the Legislature of a commonwealth, the protection of whose laws I long enjoyed.

Legislators of New-Jersey, in the name of the Alumni of Nassau Hall, I appeal to you, in behalf of their Alma Mater, and invite your patriotic exertion to preserve to her the high rank which she has hitherto maintained among the colleges of America. I appeal to you in the name of the living and of the dead, whose sentiments, if living, would be mine.

I address you in behalf of the wishes of that crowd of patriot soldiers, orators, and statesmen, of learned and eloquent divines, and of enlightened private citizens, who, in times past, have been annually dispersed from those ancient and venerated retreats of learning throughout America

Among them, have been the heads and ornaments of the Churches and Universities of other states, as well as your own; the guides of their public councils; the commanders of the armies of our common country; some of the most distinguished members of its federal legislature and judiciary; and the chief magistrate, whose learning, patriotism, and ability, so largely contributed to the formation and ratification of that constitution, which has become the firmest bond of our happy union.

Every other state has begun to adapt its literary institutions, to the advanced improvement of its own condition, and of the arts and sciences of the world. Those states, therefore, from whose bosom the pupils of the college of New-Jersey were formerly drawn, are now preparing for their instruction at home.

Yet, this need not discourage you. Economy, and discipline, the constant companions of application and improvement, will still attract to you pupils from neighbouring and

distant states, and even from foreign countries, if, in all other respects, you afford to them equal advantages for instruction.

Education is, however, now calling to its aid, facilities for acquiring knowledge, and attractions to its cultivation, which our fathers knew not on this side of the Atlantic.

It is confirming its necessary and wholesome discipline, by the charms of imagination, and all the advantages which commerce and the liberal arts supply for the pursuit of science.

Gardens filled with the productions of every soil and climate; museums of natural history stored with the treasures of the fossil, mineral, and animal kingdoms, are added to the extended apparatus of chemistry, and natural philosophy; and to those splendid libraries, in which are deposited the learning of all nations, past and present.

Painting, and sculpture, and architecture, are supplying pictures and models to form the taste, and elevate the genius of the future age; and groves and walks for exercise and recreation, adorned with the memorials of departed worth, like those which crowned of old the banks of the Ilissus, are winning the youthful student to the muses, from the noisy street, and the [illegible] haunts of dissipation.

Nassau Hall has been long a college. We ask you to extend its classic ground, to multiply its professorships, and make it an university;—to place it at the head of that system of popular education, of which your school fund is designed to supply the basis. Why wait any longer for the growth of that fund,* in order to lay this broad foundation for the intelligence and virtue of your people? Other states have not done so. By proceeding at once to your object, you will release the citizens of your comonwealth from a heavy burthen, by cheapening their instruction:

* See Appendix, Note XXIV.

You will arrest their emigration to other states, by attaching them to their own; and hasten, by a denser population, the progress of domestic arts.

Profit by the example of Connecticut. New-Jersey very nearly equals this flourishing state in population; closely resembles her in commercial situation; and surpasses her greatly in territorial extent, and in agricultural and mineral resources.

Yale sends forth annually a hundred graduates in a single class; more than half of which are natives of Connecticut: and so will New Jersey, when her system of elementary education shall rival that which sustains the college of New-Haven, as it may well do with the aid of public spirit.

Am I presumptuous in the use of this freedom? Was I not once of Jersey? enrolled among the labourers upon her public highway, and that militia, on which she relies for her defence: the descendants of those gallant men, who, in the dark hour of national adversity, with no light to cheer them but that reflected from the face of Washington, and a trust in God, rallied around the wavering standard of the revolution; and bearing it aloft amidst wintry snows across the rapid Delaware, the plains of Trenton, and these classic fields, tracking their perilous path with the mingled blood of themselves and their astonished foes, planted it triumphantly amidst the rocky summits of those distant hills?

Would that every man in Jersey were here present, and I had a voice to reach the remotest ear of the assembled multitude! I would tell those freemen in the language of one, that their fathers' struggle is unfinished;—that it is yet left to them to perpetuate the blessings purchased by the valour of their sires; and to secure to their native state the rank in the civil history of the union, which they earned

for her during the age of the revolution, in the annals of its military renown.

The old men of such an assembly, might have truly exclaimed with the Latin poet, in their youth :—

"Multa ferunt anni venientes commoda secum ;"

may its youth never have cause to finish in their age this classic period, by exclaiming with equal truth :—

"Multa recedentes adimunt."

My young friends, whose affectionate voice has called me hither, yours is no minor part in the interesting purpose which we all have at heart. How many recollections rush on mine, as I think of your present occupation : and remember, not only, that it once was mine, but, with whom I shared all its delights, and all its cares ! Alas ! many of them are now numbered with the dead. So, sleep Forsyth,* and Watson,† who lived not to fulfil all the bright promise of their youth. Of those who survive them, how many, like your speaker, have cause to regret the wasted advantages of those early days ! Days of friendly converse, and of social study, spent amidst the peaceful calm, shed over these beloved retreats of science, philosophy, and piety. Departed days ! you are gone, never more to return !

Their enjoyment, my young friends, is at present yours. It is yours to improve them, as they pass away, to the best advantage : and among the means of effecting this, are the societies into which you are divided. They are the fruitful seminaries of every useful, manly, and noble quality, comprehending the precious germs of friendship, literature, and morals.

Can a spectacle be presented, more gratifying than that which they exhibit, of a body of young men assembled

* See Appenddix, Note XXV. † See Appendix Note XXVI.

from every part of our numerous republics, governing themselves upon the model which their political union supplies, at an age when passion pleads for indulgence, and pleasure loosens restraint. As legislators, judges, and magistrates, regulating their own deportment, and the conduct of each other, by the strictest rules of order and justice, wisely framed, and impartially, faithfully, and zealously enforced. And all this accomplished, moreover, under a seal of impenetrable secrecy, stamping its self-denying control and impression upon all the habits of youth; restraining its indiscretion, its precipitancy, and even its ardent ambition?

Never, I assure you, have I felt, in the councils or prosperity of my native state, or of the union, a livelier or deeper interest, than I once experienced in the proceedings and the welfare of one of those societies, of which you are now the active members; and, trust me, the former, call for no greater sacrifices, elicit no nobler qualities of action, and confer no higher happiness than it is in your power now to render, to cherish, and to enjoy. With your patriotic love, and generous emulation, mingle mutual regard for one another.

The friendships of the world! what are they often, but a name, for the temporary leagues of ever fluctuating interests! 'Tis here, my young friends, that you may form the tenderest associations; calculated to endure not for the present life only, but may we not hope for eternity.

But parting day admonishes me to close ~~terminate~~ this discourse, as I do, with emotions I have scarcely the voice to utter; and, among them, with a fervent wish, in terminating an intercourse which must end almost as soon it has begun, that the delight which I once experienced here, and all other blessings of this, and of the life to come, may be yours.

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

NOTE I.

MAY I be allowed, for the sake of illustration, to advert to the slow progress of the abolition of the African Slave Trade, both in Europe and America—that frightful traffic, which very recent intelligence from abroad assures us, has been within late years augmented both in extent and atrocity. A trade which America made piracy by statute; but has twice refused to make piracy by treaty; —thus denying to humanity, the only means of effecting its utter and speedy extermination; supplying to other nations an apology for its continued prosecution, and to itself a shelter from detection, arrest, and punishment, beneath the prostituted cover of that sacred banner which Decatur, and Perry, and McDonough, have made so illustrious. If the American people understood all the bearings of this awful subject, it is impossible that any considerable portion of them would confound it with the arrogant, odious, and inadmissible belligerent claim of Great Britain to impress her seamen from our ships upon the ocean, by the mere authority of her naval officers; the very pretension to which right, however, she grounds on a state of actual war alone, and explicitly renounces in time of peace, by the concurrent voices of her monarch, her judges, and her parliament. The evidence of the first will be found in the very negotiation which led to the treaty, recently rejected by the Senate of the United States; of the second in the sentence of Sir William Scott, pronounced in the case of the French slave ship Le Louis; and of the last in the republication by the House of Commons, of a report of a committee of the House of Representatives, accompanied by high encomiums.

The motion to make the slave trade piracy by act of Congress, was grounded on the avowed hope of rendering it piracy, by universal consent; and a contemporaneous resolution adopted by the House, expressly sanctioned this hope. It could be accomplished by a single treaty; but beginning with the first state that would accede to the principle, was expected to receive in succession the support of

all. It supposed nothing more to be necessary, than a simple definition of the traffic which should be treated as piracy, and an international agreement so to regard it, by the parties to the treaty *quoad* themselves, and all other states who might afterwards concur in the same principles.

It is but fair to add, that it has beeen objected to making this trade piratical by treaty, as the House of Representatives contemplated; that by incorporating such a principle in the law of nations, we should expose our ships to vexatious search, by the ships of other states, and render the trader himself liable to the consequences of piracy, [redacted] subject him, though a native of the United States, to trial, condemnation and punishment, by a foreign tribunal. But, on the other hand, do we not now leave the ordinary sea-robber, who in the days of Homer, as at present, stole men as well as their property, without regard to their complexion, to be tried, and if guilty, punished by every tribunal, and every government on earth, heathen or Christian? His vessel is held liable to search, though he be but a robber; while the wretch, who, through like cupidity, to the shame of one continent, lays waste another, to carry reproach and mortification to a third—who wages unauthorized private war on millions, and either murders his captives in cold blood, by imprisoning them in the pestilential atmosphere of floating dungeons, or consigns them, if they chance to survive their voyage, to interminable slavery in a foreign clime—who literally causes to wither in hopeless anguish, more than he kills—we will not expose to similar detection and punishment.

As to the apprehended abuse of this power—the probability of a resort to improper means of detecting and punishing one sort of pirates—it is not greater than that which attends the search for every other; that very power, in the exercise of which, at much national cost, we recently despatched whole squadrons to the unwholesome climate of the West India seas. This, like other piracies, (for so it truly is,) would promptly cease, if certain punishment followed its perpetration; and unlike all other piracies, when once effectually suppressed, it could never be again revived. The abuse therefore to which it is apprehended that it might give rise, would be as transient as the period required for its utter extermination.

What citizen of the United States, in the remotest corner of America, has not cause to exult, and to feel the security of his own rights augmented by the recent effusion of education throughout New York, a state which also furnishes nearly one sixth part of the delegation of the popular branch of the national legislature, and whose admirable institutions, of every kind, by binding to her her own population

and attracting emigrants from her eastern sisters, must continue to augment her relative, as well as her positive power and influence.

May she remember how she construed the powers of the Federal Government, when she sought through them the means of increasing her prosperity, and not refuse to her less fortunate sister states a constitutional participation in that common fund for internal improvement which she once sought to apply to her own benefit, through the agency of her legislature and of some of her most distinguished citizens.

NOTE II.

It was once a popular doctrine in the United States, that Europe, and especially Great Britain, were dependent on America, because in the commercial exchanges between them, the former supplied the luxuries and the latter the necessaries of life. This doctrine had mingled in the legislation of Congress, from a period preceding the ratification of the first commercial treaty with England, down to the late tariff, when it underwent an entire revolution; and it is now contended that national independence consists not in the relative equality of foreign imports, and exports; of the benefits which a nation confers, compared with those which it receives; but in not trading at all. The Chinese, who tried this system very long with all the world, and still persevere in it towards their northern neighbours, have not found their happiness or their independence even promoted by it. For it did not prevent a horde of barbarians from overrunning their territory, and subverting the existing dynasty, by planting a Tartar family on the Imperial throne.

NOTE III.

The greater part of the facts cited in the body of the discourse, relative to the condition of the population of England and Wales, is derived from a recent statistical illustration, by a society of gentlemen, of the territorial extent and population, commerce, taxation, consumption, insolvency, pauperism, and crime of the British Empire, published in London in 1825, and which with apparent truth, assumes as its motto, "Every line a moral—every page a history."

The reader is referred to it for farther evidence of the truth of the conclusions in the text, from some of its prominent facts, which more recent as well as prior intelligence from the same country lamentably confirms.

NOTE IV.

The letter here referred to was written by a country gentleman, in answer to an application addressed to him, from liberal public motives, to induce him to become a candidate for a seat in the House of Commons. The price of a British vote would seem from certain facts referred to by him, and stated in the biography, lately published of a celebrated parliamentary orator, to be as fixed in the political market, as the sum charged to the hospitals of London, for subjects of dissection by the resurrection men, who nightly prowl among the graveyards of that commercial capital. Such constituents cannot complain that their representatives have a price as well as themselves; or that "having been bought, they were afterwards sold."

NOTE V.

The state of Virginia, the first in the Union to adopt the scheme of colonizing any part of her coloured race, has also been the first to afford direct aid from her treasury, to the American Society for colonizing the free people of colour of the United States.

This society, which has a right to claim the liberal support of all classes of the American community—of the Christian and philanthropist, since it proposes to plant, and has succeeded in planting, Christianity and civilization on a coast hitherto darkened by superstition, and desolated by the slave trade—of the abolitionist, since it removes, by colonizing the freedman, one of the strongest moral and political objections to his emancipation—and of the southern proprietor, since it furnishes an additional security to his future tranquillity and happiness—has, by the most unaccountable prejudice, been misrepresented, condemned and persecuted by those whose solid interests, and wise, temperate, and benevolent views, it was instituted expressly to promote.

The resolution of the General Assembly, recommending its avowed and only objects, preceded the existence of the society, and originated at a date much earlier than its contemplated formation. From this resolution it is not only believed, but known, that the society itself sprung into existence; though its immediate formation has been ascribed, and perhaps with truth, to a gentleman of a different state. These remarks are added to manifest, that in its origin, its purpose was as innocent, as in its progress its operation, so far, has been beneficent; and that it is animated by no other motives, than those which its written constitution proclaims to the world.

NOTE VI.

Pauperism in Scotland was, but half a century ago, as rare as legal crime, notwithstanding the inequality of wealth then existing, and of which the last income tax of Great Britain furnished, even in this portion of the united kingdoms, such striking evidence; clearly demonstrating the practicability of sustaining national intelligence and morality, (alongside of very great disparity in the external condition of a people,) by the diffusion of knowledge through the means of elementary instruction. Of the proprietors of the entire territory of North Britain, comprehending about nineteen millions of acres, fewer than eight thousand out of two millions of people, it is believed, paid any share whatever of this tax.

If, in this country, national education has not latterly kept pace with national industry, the consequent calamity is ascribable to the neglect or indifference of that government which has supplanted the former legislature of Scotland. The same neglect has been manifested of Ireland.

NOTE VII.

Each contributor to the public revenue of Great Britain, has profited by the protection of the government, to the extent of his enjoyment of life, liberty, and property; but he has paid for that protection according to a very different ratio from the comparative sum of those enjoyments, as the late heavy taxes on the chief necessaries of life would now be considered in England sufficient evidence. The cost of the diffusion of education, and the reduction of the national debt should be defrayed by all her people, in proportion to their ability to bear it. To effect, by spunging, the latter object, would be the height of injustice. The holders of the debt should contribute no more than their fair proportion to its discharge, with all other possessors of income, but with this modification extended alike to all, that the contributions to the public revenue should be derived from that part of his private revenue, or income, which each contributor can afford to spare. A graduated income tax, increasing in an ascending ratio, with the magnitude of the income taxed for the payment of the debt, would be founded in justice, limit the growth of the present calamity without sensibly impairing the spring of commercial activity, and, coupled with an extended system of popular education, exclude the possibility of a return, in a form so alarming as the present public distress of both England and Ireland. The very existence of the debt itself favors the growth of the extreme inequality

of wealth, because the possession of any portion of that debt neither presupposes nor requires industry, knowledge, or merit in its possessor. It can be acquired by simple bequest or gratuitous transfer, or by the gambling system of stock-jobbing, and preserved without labour or intelligence. One man might own the whole, and command the power which the possession of so much concentrated wealth or labour would confer, without any other exertion of care or thought, except that of not destroying the evidences of his title to its continual possession. Its gradual discharge, therefore, would rid the nation of one of the most fruitful sources of its present inequality of condition; the existence of an immense property, which in its own nature does not provide, as most other estates do, a limit to its possible accumulation—to say nothing of its liability to great abuse in the hands of its possessors, and the powerful incentive which it offers to those who pay its interest without having its benefit, to rid themselves of its pressure by subverting its foundation.

The writer does not design to recommend an income tax, in preference to a tax on consumption, to other states, or to his own. Such a tax in America, where there is no rent roll to measure its imposition, would be inapplicable to the agriculturalists. Amidst the variety of bank and other public stocks, it would be liable to great objections, from its inequality, where apparently most easy of execution; and among the holders of stocks, as in all the branches of trade, it would prove in its practical operation the hot-bed of innumerable frauds. It is here proposed, as the prompt remedy of a dreadful disease, and for the illustration of other principles Nor does the writer design his remarks, on the nature and tendency of a public debt, to apply to that of the United States, which bears too small a proportion to their fixed and moveable capital, to merit the objections here made to the debt of Great Britain.

NOTE VIII.

In the Appendix to the Biography of Burns, written not long after his death, by the amiable friend of his bereaved family, the late Dr. Currie of Liverpool, along with many excellent arguments in favour of popular education, from the pen of the brother of the deceased poet, may be found the following particulars of the origin of the Scottish system of national education; which the author remarks, "has escaped the notice of all the historians."

The parish schools of Scotland originated in a recommendation of the king (James VI.) and privy council of the 10th of December 1616,

which was ratified in 1633, by a statute of Charles I.; which empowered the Bishop, with the consent of the landed proprietors of a parish, or a majority of the inhabitants, if the landed proprietors refused to attend a meeting for that purpose, to assess every plough of land, or farm, in proportion to the number of ploughs employed in its culture, with a certain sum for establishing a school.

Depending on the consent of the heritors and inhabitants, this provision proved *ineffectual*, and was superseded *in* 1646,* *by another statute*, which *obliged* the *proprietors*, and the *minister* of each parish to meet and assess the several proprietors with the sum requisite for building a school-house, and to elect a school-master and provide his salary. The assessment was required to be laid on the land in the same proportion as it was rated for the support of the clergy and the payment of the land tax.

But in case the proprietors of any parish failed to discharge this duty, then the persons, constituting what was called the committee of supply of the country, a body consisting of the principal landholders, or any *five of them*, were authorized to impose the assessment, on the representation of the presbytery in which the parish is situated.

To secure the employment of adequate teachers, the right of the proprietors to elect, by their votes, was, by a statute of 1693, subjected to the control of the presbytery of the district, who were empowered to judge of the qualifications of the teacher and of his deportment after his election.

The number of parishes in Scotland is 877, and allowing in each for the salary of a teacher £7 sterling, and, for other expenses twice that sum; the total cost of education for a population of one million and a half, did not, five and twenty years ago, exceed £18,417 sterling, or near 86,000 dollars: the *legal* provision, exclusive of the contribution of scholars, amounted to one third of this sum. By an act of the British parliament, the 4th of George I. chap. 6. £2000 sterling of the proceeds of the sales of the Scottish estates forfeited in the rebellion of 1715, was converted into a permanent fund for erecting and maintaining schools in the Highlands: and the Society for promoting Christian Knowledge, incorporated in 1709, have applied a large part of their fund to the same purpose. Besides the schools established by law, the lower classes of people in Scotland, where the parishes are large, unite in establishing schools of their own.

So convinced are the poor people of Scotland, by experience, of

* The Schools of Massachusetts were established the ensuing year.

the benefit of instruction to their children, that though they may often find it difficult to feed and clothe them, they almost always procure them some kind of instruction.

I cannot deny myself the pleasure of transcribing literally from the same Appendix the following statements, which are abundantly verified by subsequent authorities:

"The influence of the school-establishment of Scotland on the peasantry of that country, seems to have decided by experience a question of legislation of the utmost importance—whether a system of national instruction for the poor be favourable to morals and good government. In the year 1698, Fletcher of Saltoun declared as follows: "There are at this day, in Scotland, two hundred thousand people begging from door to door. And though the number of them be perhaps double to what it formerly was, by reason of this present great distress (a famine then prevailed), yet in all times there have been about one hundred thousand of those vagabonds who have lived without any regard or subjection either to the laws of the land, or even those of God and Nature; fathers incestuous by accompanying with their own daughters, the son with the mother, and the brother with the sister." He goes on to say, that no magistrate ever could discover that they had ever been baptized, or in what way one in a hundred went out of the world. He accuses them as frequently guilty of robbery, and sometimes of murder. "In years of plenty," says he, "many thousands of them meet together in the mountains, where they feast and riot for many days; and at country weddings, markets, burials, and other public occasions, they are to be seen, both men and women, perpetually drunk, cursing, blaspheming, and fighting together." This high minded statesman, of whom it is said, by a cotemporary, 'that he would lose his life readily to save his country, and would not do a base thing to serve it' thought the evil so great, that he proposed, as a remedy, the revival of domestic slavery. A better remedy has been found; which, in the silent lapse of a century, has proved effectual. The statute of 1696, the noble legacy of the Scottish parliament, to their country, began, soon after this, to operate; and happily, as the minds of the poor received instruction, the Union opened new channels of industry, and new fields of action to their view.

"At the present day, there is perhaps no country in Europe, in which, in proportion to its population, so small a number of crimes fall under the chastisement of the criminal law as Scotland. We have the best authority for asserting, that on an average of thirty years preceding the year 1797, the executions in that division of the

island did not amount to six annually; and one quarter sessions for the town of Manchester only has sent, according to Mr. Hume, more felons to the plantations than all the judges of Scotland usually do in the space of a year. It might appear invidious to attempt a calculation of the many thousand individuals in Manchester and its vicinity who can neither read nor write. A majority of those who suffer the punishment of death for their crimes, in every part of England, are, it is believed, in this miserable state of ignorance."—[The works of R. Burns App. No. 1. Note A. London, 3d ed. pub. in 1802.]

The present cost of common education, in Scotland, is about two shillings and sixpence sterling a quarter, or two dollars and twenty-two cents per annum: differing very little from that of the Society schools of Connecticut.

NOTE IX.

Some account of the Silesian schools first appeared, more than twenty years ago, in a letter from an American traveller, published at Philadelphia, in a number of the Port Folio. The same letter, then first seen by the author of this note, now appears in an American volume entitled "Letters from Silesia," known to be the work of the present chief magistrate of the United States. Popular education has, of late, been an object of attention in Denmark, and many other portions of the continent of Europe, but our libraries do not supply a description of the forms which have been given to it.

NOTE X.

Travels in the French Republic, containing a circumstantial view of the Present State of Learning, &c. in that country, in 1798:—by Thomas Bygge, Professor of Mathematical Astronomy in the University of Copenhagen, &c. and translated from the Danish by John Jones, L. L. D. and published in London in 1801. See also Tayler's Statistics of the French Empire, published in the city of Washington.

NOTE XI.

The only laws of this state, touching education, that the writer has been enabled to discover in her code, is one establishing her university, and one other relative to her poor, in which authority is

given to bind out their children under certain circumstances, as apprentices, at home, or in Massachusetts, or Connecticut. with an obligation on the master to teach them, if males, to read, write, and cypher; and if females, to read and write, only.

This omission is the more extraordinary, since this state, next to Delaware, the least in the union, has been distinguished by land and by sea in two wars with the same enemy, and justly boasts of her Green, and her Perry.

NOTE XII.

The first act of Massachusetts respecting her schools, passed in May, 1647, being but a few months after the Scotch act of 1646, (see Note VIII.) and its first section began with this preamble:

"It being the chief project of Satan, to keep men from the knowledge of the Scripture, as in former times, keeping them in unknown tongues, that so, at least, the true sense and meaning of the original might be clouded and corrupted with false glosses of deceivers; to the end, that learning may not be buried in the graves of our forefathers, in church, and commonwealth, the Lord assisting our endeavours. It is, therefore, ordered by this court, and authority thereof, that every township within this jurisdiction, after the Lord has increased them to fifty householders, shall then forthwith appoint one within their towns, to teach all such children as shall resort to him, to read and write," &c. &c.

NOTE XIII.

Vermont established her school fund on the 17th of November, 1825, and provides that it shall not be appropriated before it shall suffice to defray the expense of keeping a free school in each district in the respective towns, for the period of *two* months in every year. The only tax embraced by the fund, consists of a six per cent. charge on the net profits of the chartered banks of the state, and another on peddler's licenses.

The school fund of New-Jersey is still less than two hundred thousand dollars, and an extension to it of a like principle of delay, will defer her system of education to another generation.

Maryland has for several years distributed from her fund, sums to aid her counties in the education of her people. By her act of February last, she has wisely copied all the northern provisions for

popular education, almost literally from the acts of New-York. She has not availed herself of a division of her counties into townships, by which she has surrendered a very great advantage; and since she has introduced the division of school districts, she has omitted this beautiful link of the New England system, without any apparent reason. The final sanction of this act, awaits the approbation of the people of this state.

NOTE XIV.

By her act of the 18th of April, 1826, New-York has provided—in pursuance of a recommendation of her superintendant of common schools, who is also her secretary of state—that the sum annually distributed among her common schools after the present year, shall be one hundred thousand dollars. An act of the same date, further provides, that the comptroller shall supply out of the general funds of the state, any deficiencies in the common school fund, to satisfy the preceding appropriation; and, as the revenue of the fund was but seventy-seven thousand three hundred and sixty-nine dollars, this act makes an appropriation of twenty-two thousand six hundred and thirty-one dollars from the ordinary revenue, to the common schools of New-York.

NOTE XV.

Vermont is distinguished by a striking peculiarity. She authorizes her selectmen to impose a tax on their towns for her schools, in case the inhabitants do not this themselves; and in the event of a failure on the part of the selectmen, to supply this omission, they are required to pay themselves the amount of the sum which they should have levied. This state furnishes another peculiarity as striking. The obligation to tax by the town-meeting, or the selectmen on a failure of the former, may be avoided, by raising the amount required by *subscription*; and the subscribers may provide for their own assessment, and the sums respectively due on their subscriptions may be collected by the collector of the town taxes. And in this state, also, the sum raised by any of the modes provided by law within any town, is withheld from any district in such town which has failed to keep a school for a twelvemonth; and the sum, in such event, paid over to those districts in the same town which have complied with the law.

NOTE XVI.

A comparative view of the returns of common schools in New-York, since the year 1816, inclusive, accompanies the late superintendant's report, and is as follows:

The year in which the report was made to the legislature.	Number of towns from which returns were made	Whole number of school districts in the said towns.	Number of school districts from which returns were received.	Amount of public monies received in the said towns.	Number of children taught in the school districts making returns.	No. of children between 5 and 15, residing in those districts.
1816	338	2755	2631	$55720 8	140106	176449
1817	355	3437	2873	64834 88	170386	198440
1818	713	3264	3228	73235 42	183253	218969
1819	402	4614	3844	93010 54	210316	235871
1820	515	5763	5118	117151 07	271877	302703
1821	545	6332	5489	146418 08	304559	317633
1822	611	6659	5882	157195 04	332979	339258
1823	649	7051	6255	173420 60	351173	357029
1824	656	7382	6705	182720 25	377034	373208
1825	698	7642	6876	182741 61	402940	383500
1826	700	7773	7117	182790 09	425350	395586

NOTE XVII.

To ascertain the total cost of popular education in Connecticut, one fifth of the annual proceeds of the assessed taxes, amounting in all to but fifty thousand dollars in this frugal commonwealth, must be added to the revenue of her school fund, when that does not supply a disbursement exceeding sixty-two thousand dollars.

This revenue amounted during the last year to seventy-two thousand dollars, or the extent of the sum to which it is limited by law; so that it has no longer a claim upon the ordinary revenue of the state to supply its deficiency.

To this sum must be further added the income of the two hundred and eight school *societies*, (a name of religious origin,) raised by voluntary taxation upon themselves.

The total expense of education in the one thousand and forty school districts of this state, may be computed on this basis, I am assured by the most respectable authority, at about one hundred and fifty-sixth ousand So, that even deducting from the number of about eighty-five thousand children in that state, returned as between the

age of four and sixteen years, several thousand for those who are educated at other schools, a number, as will be seen by reference to the experience of New-York, much too great, if any indeed should on that account be deducted, the cost of the education of each pupil does not exceed two dollars: a sum according very nearly with the cheapest education at the parish schools of Scotland, which is two shillings and sixpence sterling, or half a French crown for the quarter.

From Massachusetts, the last returns comprehended those only of one hundred and twenty-eight towns, or townships, which had expended on public education one hundred and sixty-four thousand dollars.

The returns from the residue of this state being unknown, it is not possible to determine exactly the annual cost of the education of each pupil; but it is not probable that it varies from that of Connecticut, or New-York.

NOTE XVIII.

As the economy attending the execution of the northern system of education furnishes one of its greatest recommendations, and the strongest incentive to its imitation by other states, it may not prove amiss to explain from whence that economy results.

The expense of a school arises chiefly from two causes, the cost of the site and house, and the annual wages or salary of its teacher. By a proper division of the territory of a state into school districts, and placing each house near the centre of its district, it becomes permanently fixed, and all loss to the fixed capital required for this first and heavy item of expenditure, from the frequent changes of the position of the school-house of a neighborhood, to accommodate the wishes of some influential proprietor, or to suit the interest, whim or caprice of the transient teacher, is effectually precluded.

But the reduction of the wages of the teacher, by the enhanced certainty afforded to him of continued employment at the same place, so long as he conducts himself well, is another very important advantage resulting from a fixed school-house and a permanent provision for its teacher. He is relieved from the humiliating and embarrassing necessity, and the inconvenient and expensive waste of time, in hunting up a school in the usual mode prevailing where this species of education is neglected. A higher consideration to the teacher than all these, is, moreover, that what the trustees or commissioners of the permanent school established by law, contract to pay him, he is

sure of receiving as soon as it becomes due, without the trouble or charge of collection, or the loss by death or accident of a large part of what he has earned

All those motives are calculated to operate with peculiar force in a country which has to look abroad for its teachers, and to invite them to change their abode.

A final consideration of some importance arises from the circumstance, that such a school having its house legally and permanently placed in the centre of a suitable district, and so provided with a teacher, will attract more pupils than are now commonly found in any country school-house to the south.

The improved and simple modes of teaching, has, moreover, very greatly increased the extent of the capacity of each teacher; and by allowing, without injury to the scholars, the admission of a much greater number of pupils into each school, diminished in the same proportion the cost of education to each scholar.

That this, though of itself the source of a great saving of expense in the modern system of elementary education, does not operate in the densest population of New-England, to the exclusion of the other sources of economy which have been enumerated, it may suffice to remark, that the school districts of Connecticut, average in surface not more than two square miles each; and dividing the whole number of pupils who may be taught in them all collectively, by the number of schools, the average number of each school will not exceed eighty scholars, nor the whole compensation to the teacher one hundred and sixty dollars a year, including every allowance.

It is thus that, in the operation of such a system, what those who can afford to pay for the education of their children now voluntarily subscribe for that purpose in those neighbourhoods in which no legal contribution is enforced, much increases what they would have to pay in the shape of taxes levied for that object; and the same so levied would, without further cost, defray the expense of educating the children of all. All, therefore, have a common interest in its establishment.

But, under the system of Virginia, an expense is at present incurred for the education of ten thousand pupils, which would in Connecticut provide for the education of twenty-two thousand five hundred; and from this expenditure the opulent classes, who have provided it, reap no benefit whatever. Were New-York to pay for the education of her four hundred and twenty-five thousand pupils, at the rate charged to the commonwealth, and educate each through the whole year, the entire annual expense of the common schools of that state

would amount to 3,825,000, or near four millions of dollars. And the actual cost of educating all the children of Virginia for a whole year, supposing her population to be six hundred thousand only and one fourth, as in New-York, to be at school, would amount to 1,350,000 dollars.

The first act of the legislature of Virginia, creating a fund for public instruction, passed in 1810. It was entitled, "An act to provide for the education of the Poor."

By this act the literary fund was established and placed under the care of a Board, whereof the governor was president, and the presiding judge of the court of appeals, the attorney general, and treasurer of the commonwealth were directors, authorized to guard and improve the fund. Two of these officers were annually elected, while the other two held their trust, by a tenure of good behaviour, calculated to give stability and consistency to the administration of the fund.

It proceeded, by slow accumulations, derived from fines, forfeitures and escheats, till an opportunity was afforded, by the existence of the United States debt to the commonwealth, for her expenditures for her own defence, in the late war, greatly to accelerate its growth.

The report of the committee of finance of the 15th of February, 1816, suggested to the house of delegates, that, "should it be the pleasure of the general assembly, to lay the foundation of a comprehensive system of public education, ample means for the accomplishment of this laudable purpose may be found in the residue of the debt due to the commonwealth from the government of the United States, and the provision which the committee have presumed to recommend for gradually extinguishing the debts of the commonwealth to the banks of Virginia."

This recommendation having received the sanction of the house, a resolution was, on the 24th of the same month, submitted to the house of delegates—adopted without a division—sent up to the senate, and returned two hours after with their concurrence. The bill of 1810, the report of the committee of finance, and the resolution which followed it, were written by the same member of the house of delegates

The resolution was in these words :—"Be it resolved by the general assembly, that the president and directors of the literary fund be requested to digest and report to the next general assembly, a system of public education, calculated to give effect to the appropria-

tions made to that object by the legislature heretofore, and *during its present session*; and to comprehend in such system the establishment of *one University*, to be called, "The University of Virginia," and such additional colleges, academies, and schools, as shall diffuse the benefits of education throughout the commonwealth: and such rules for the government of such university, colleges, academies and schools, as shall produce economy in the expenditures for the establishment, and maintenance, and good order and discipline in the management thereof."

The same day that this resolution passed both houses, the house of delegates passed a bill "To provide an accurate chart of each county, and a general map of the territory of the commonwealth." Both houses had, during the same session, established by law a board of public works, and a "Fund for internal improvement;" and provided, by a liberal appropriation, "for the repair, improvement and preservation of the public edifices and grounds in the metropolis of the state." The house of delegates had rejected what was designed to be a part of the same system, the collection and biennial report of statistical tables, illustrating the actual condition of the entire commonwealth.

No one of these measures originated in any suggestions without the two houses of the general assembly. They were, emphatically, the measures of a legislature, united by good feeling, and animated by the public spirit which the recent war had excited throughout an invaded commonwealth, just then relieved by peace from suffering and danger, alike encountered and resisted by all her children.

In the interval between the termination of this session of the general assembly and the ensuing, the president and directors of the literary fund, applied to various sources for information on which to ground the system they were called upon to devise for the next legislature. At its commencement they submitted a report upon the subject. It was referred to a committee of which the mover of the preceding resolution was not a member. That committee reported several bills, but not having been acted upon at a late period of the session, by invitation of the chairman of the committee, the subjoined was prepared under great pressure of time, and moved as a substitute for the several bills reported by the committee. It embodied all the suggestions which the mover had submitted to the president and directors of the literary fund, along with several which (as a comparison of their report with the bill will show) they had rejected. The substitute was adopted by a large majority of

the house of delegates, and lost in the senate by an equal division of voices.

The substitute left the house of delegates very nearly in the subjoined form: the only material change having been effected with the approbation of the mover, by leaving the whole territory of the state open for the site of the university of Virginia. Its location on the line first described in the substitute, was prompted by a knowledge of the intention of a gentleman of Virginia, then much advanced in years, to devise the whole of a large estate, believed to exceed in value $100,000, to the university, if it were placed in a certain point in this line. This gentleman has since died, and left his estate to Washington college, at Lexington.

It was also believed that the health of the university its morality, the economy of its subsistence, and the general expenses of its maintenance, would be promoted by placing it west of the Blue Ridge. Its structure or plan was to be provided for by law in reference to its discipline and tranquil government.

An amendment proposed by Mr. Mercer, of Loudoun, to the bill "providing for the establishment of an University."

Strike out from the word "that," in the first line, to the end of the bill, and insert the following words:

Be it enacted by the General Assembly, That "for the purpose of digesting and carrying into effect the system of public education provided for by the last general assembly, and recommended by the president and directors of the literary fund, there shall be elected *annually* by joint ballot of the senate and house of delegates *ten* directors, who shall be styled "The board of public instruction," in which name they shall have a common seal and perpetual succession; shall be capable of suing and being sued, pleading and being impleaded, and shall have and enjoy all the rights and privileges of a corporation.

II. *And be it further enacted*, That the governor of the commonwealth shall be, *ex officio*, president of "The board of public instruction;" that any citizen of this commonwealth shall be capable of being a director of the board, but that *two* of the whole number of the directors shall reside westward of the Allegany mountains; two between the Allegany and the Blue Ridge; *four* be-between the Blue Ridge, and the great post road, which passing through the territory of the commonwealth, crosses the principal rivers thereof at or about the head of tide water; and the residue between that road and the sea coast. The board shall annually elect from their own body a vice-president, who, in the absence of the president, shall preside over their deliberations; they shall have power also to appoint a secretary, and such officers as may be required for conducting the business of the board, who shall receive

for their services such compensation as the board may allow to be paid out of the revenue of the literary fund. Each director of the board shall receive, from the same fund, such compensation for his services as may be allowed by law, which, until otherwise provided, shall be the same mileage for travelling to and from the place of sitting, and the same pay, per diem, during his necessary attendance on the board, as is now allowed by law to a member of the general assembly. A majority of the whole number of directors shall be necessary to constitute a board for the transaction of business, but the president or a single director may adjourn from day to day, until a board is formed. The board shall have power to fill any vacancy which may occur in their own body, either from death, resignation, removal, inability, or any other cause; they shall hold an annual meeting at or at such other place as may be designated by law, until the university of Virginia shall be erected, after which, their annual meetings shall be held thereat. Their first annual meeting shall commence on the and continue until the business of the board is transacted. At this meeting, the board shall prescribe the time of their future annual meetings: but the president of the board may at his own pleasure, or shall at the request of any three directors thereof, convene an extra meeting of the board, for the transaction of any extraordinary business which may devolve on the corporation.

III. *And be it further enacted*, That the board may at any time enact, alter, or amend such rules, as to them may seem proper, for the purpose of regulating the order of their proceedings; they may adjourn for any period, or when occasion may require it, to meet at any other place, than that designated by law: they shall have power, subject to the limitations hereinafter provided, to establish and locate an university, to be called the university of Virginia; and the several colleges and academies hereinafter named or described; to determine the number and title of the professorships therein; to examine, appoint, and regulate the compensation of the several professors; to appoint the trustees of the several colleges and academies; to prescribe the course of instruction and discipline of the university, colleges, academies and primary schools; to provide some just and practical mode of advancing, from the primary schools to the academies, from the academies to the colleges, and from these to the university, as many of the most meritorious children of indigence, as the revenue of the literary fund may suffice to educate and maintain, after the whole system of public instruction, which the board may devise, shall have been put in operation. In framing this system, the board shall regard the primary schools as its foundation; and in its gradual execution, care shall be taken by the board of public instruction and by the president and directors of the literary fund, that no money shall be drawn from the revenue of that fund, for the establishment of the university, or any academy, or college, so long as it is probable that such an application of the fund may leave any primary schools unprovided for. In fine, the board of public instruction shall have power to enact, repeal, alter, or amend such by-laws, rules and regulations relative to the various objects committed to their trust, as to them may seem expedient; provided the same be not in-

consistent with the constitution and laws of Virginia or of the United States of America; and they are further authorized to recommend to the general assembly, from time to time, such general laws, in relation to public education, as may be calculated, in their opinion, to promote the intellectual and moral improvement of the commonwealth.

IV. *And be it further enacted*, That there shall be established within the commonwealth as many primary schools as shall tend to promote the easy diffusion of knowledge among the youth of all classes of society, and for establishing and properly regulating such schools, the whole territory of the commonwealth shall be divided into small and convenient jurisdictions to be denominated townships and wards. For this purpose the several county and corporation courts shall, at their next *May or June* term, appoint three commissioners, with authority to divide their respective counties into two or more townships and their respective corporations into two or more wards; provided, that no township shall contain fewer than *thirty* square miles, that where any city, borough or town, does not contain more than *one hundred* white families, it shall be comprehended in some township; where its population exceeds that number and does not reach *two* hundred white families, it shall constitute one ward; and where its population exceeds the number last mentioned, it may be divided into two or more wards, according to the discretion of the commissioners. The commissioners shall give separate denominations to each township and ward, so as to distinguish them from each other by name; and shall designate some central or convenient place in each, for the public meetings required to be held therein. They shall derive the boundaries of their townships and wards, from their county or corporation lines; and the mountains, streams of water, roads or streets intersecting their counties or corporations without regard to straight lines, and having described their townships or wards intelligibly, in writing, shall report them to their respective county or corporation courts. In performing this duty, the commissioners shall assemble at the seat of justice, in their respective counties or corporations; and shall receive, each, the sum of *two* dollars for every day not exceeding *three* in number, during which they may be so engaged in the public service. They shall sign and deliver their report, when finished, to the clerk of their county or corporation court; who shall certify the report to the court and the number of days employed by each commissioner in preparing the said report. Such certificate shall entitle the commissioner to receive such sum as it may specify, out of the ensuing county levy, and the court shall regulate the county levy, so as to provide therefor. As soon as the court shall receive the report, they shall attentively examine the same, and after making such corrections or alterations therein as they may deem necessary or expedient, they shall cause the clerk to insert the report, with the corrections or alterations if any have been made, in the record of their proceeding; and the said report, so recorded, shall be deemed and taken to be complete; *Provided*, That the court may, in the same manner, at any time thereafter, alter the boundary of any townships or ward: or increase the number of townships, or wards within their respective jurisdictions.

V. *And be it further enacted*, That whenever any person or persons, body politic or corporate, in any township or ward, shall provide a lot of ground of *two* acres in extent, or of the value of *two hundred* dollars, with a school-house thereupon of the value of *two hundred and fifty* dollars, and convey the same to the president and directors of the literary fund, and have the conveyance therefor recorded in the proper court, and transmit a certified copy thereof to the said president and directors, said house shall be regarded as a primary school-house. The value or extent of the lot and house above mentioned to be ascertained by any three freeholders to be appointed by any magistrate residing in a neighbouring township or ward, and the valuation when made to be certified by a majority of the said freeholders to the president and directors of the literary fund.

VI. *And be it further enacted*, That whenever one or more primary school-houses shall have been provided in manner aforesaid in any township or ward, the court of the county or corporation containing such township or ward, shall appoint three or more discreet persons, residing within the same, to hold an election therein, of five trustees for the government of such primary school, and of all other similar schools which may be at any time thereafter established within the limits of such township or ward. The commissioners so appointed shall give as public notice as practicable, of the time of holding the election, which shall be in not less than *thirty*, nor more than *sixty* days after their appointment. The place of holding such election shall be that designated for all public meetings within the township or ward. The mode of election shall be *viva voce*, and shall correspond, as nearly as possible, in all respects, with that of the delegates to the General Assembly. The polls shall be opened at ten o'clock in the morning of the day of election, and closed at sunset, or sooner if there be no opposition. All free white male housekeepers within the township or ward, shall have the right of suffrage. And when the polls shall have been closed, the commissioners shall proclaim the five persons having the greatest number of votes polled, to be duly elected trustees for one year, or until the next election of the primary schools of the township or ward for which the election shall have been held: and they shall certify to the court of the county or corporation, the names of the trustees so elected, the number of votes given for each, and the date of the election; which certificate shall be recorded by the clerk. Every election after the first, in any township or ward, shall be held on the *first Monday of May*, under the direction of commissioners appointed as aforesaid; but should the election fail for any cause, to be made on the day appointed, the trustees in office, for the past, shall serve for the ensuing year; and until their successors shall be elected in manner aforesaid. The trustees shall have power to fill any vacancy which may occur in their own body, either from death, resignation, removal, inability, or other cause. They shall have power to elect one of their body president thereof, who with any two others may constitute a board for transacting all necessary business devolving on the trustees of the primary schools of the township or ward. Their first meeting shall be held where

their election was held; every other meeting at such place as the board of trustees may from time to time prescribe.

VII. *And be it further enacted*, That the board of trustees of the primary schools of any township or ward, shall have power to appoint a teacher for each of the primary schools within their respective townships or wards; to fix his salary; and to remove or displace him for incapacity or misconduct. They shall have authority to prescribe such rules and regulations relative to the instruction and discipline of their schools as may seem to them expedient, so that they be not inconsistent with the constitution and laws of the state, or of the United States, or of such general rules as the board of public instruction may prescribe, in relation to the government of the primary schools of the commonwealth.

VIII. *And be it further enacted*, That all the free white children resident within the township or ward in which any primary school is established, or where there is more than one such school within the township or ward, resident within the precincts laid down by the trustees for any particular school, shall be entitled to receive tuition at such school free of any charge whatever: *Provided*, That the board of trustees who have the government of the school may demand of such parents, guardians, or masters as are able to pay without inconvenience for the education of their children, wards, or apprentices, such fees of tuition as the said trustees may deem reasonable and proper: the fees to be made payable to, and to be collected by such person as the board of trustees may appoint, and to constitute a fund for the payment of a part of the salary of the teacher, and to purchase such books as may be necessary for the instruction of those children who are admitted into the school without any charge for tuition.

IX. *And be it further enacted*, That so soon as the board of trustees of the primary schools of any township or ward shall have appointed a teacher for any primary school, the president and directors of the Literary Fund shall have authority, and are required, on receiving notice thereof, to allot out of the annual revenue of the Literary Fund, *two hundred dollars* for the salary of such teacher, and *ten dollars* for the purchase of books and other implements of instruction, to be distributed, by order of the trustees, among those pupils of the school who are admitted therein free of charge, or who most need such provision. The salary of the teacher and the sum aforesaid shall be paid quarterly, by the president and directors of the Literary Fund, to the order of the board of trustees, subscribed by the president thereof, in behalf of the board, and countersigned by the clerk of the county court, who shall certify by endorsement thereon, that the president appears of record to be a trustee of the board elected for the said township or ward.

X. *And be it further enacted*, That the board of public instruction shall, as soon as can be conveniently done, divide the territory of the commonwealth, from reference to the last census of the free white population thereof, into academical districts, containing each one or more counties, and as near as practicable, an equal number of such population, and cause their secretary to record such partition, having first numbered the districts therein from one upwards,

in the minutes of their proceedings, and to transmit a certified copy thereof to the president and directors of the Literary Fund, who shall cause the same to be, in like manner, recorded; and shall also publish it in one or more newspapers printed in the city of Richmond, for the information of the people of the commonwealth.

XI. *And be it further enacted*, That where there shall exist in any such district, an academy already established by law or otherwise, the trustees or other persons in whom the property of the same is vested, are authorized to submit to the board of public instruction a report of the actual condition of their institution; in which they shall set forth its relative position to the boundaries of the district, the number and dimensions, value and state of repair of the edifices belonging to it, and the extent of the ground on which they are erected; the number and denomination of the professors and teachers employed therein, and of the pupils educated thereat, in the year next preceding the date of the report: and should it be the opinion of the board, that such academy is properly situated for the benefit of the district, and that its buildings and grounds will answer their intended purposes, they may report their decision thereupon to the president and directors of the literary fund: and upon legal conveyance being made of the said ground and edifices to the said president and directors for the use of the literary fund, the said academy shall be entitled to all the benefits which may be extended to any academy which may be erected in pursuance of this act, and shall be subject to all the rules and regulations in relation to the government thereof, which the board of public instruction or the general assembly may provide for the general government of the academies of the commonwealth: *Provided*, That the trustees of any such academy shall continue to hold their offices and to supply vacancies occurring in their own body as heretofore authorized by law.

XII. *And be it further enacted*, That in case any such academy shall be chargeable with any existing debt, not exceeding one-fourth part in amount, of the actual value of its land and buildings; or the said buildings shall require repairs, or any enlargement or alteration thereof, the board of public instruction may recommend to the president and directors of the literary fund, an appropriation from any surplus revenue which may remain of the fund after providing for the several primary schools chargeable thereon, of a sum sufficient to discharge such debt, or to repair, alter, or enlarge the said buildings, so that such sum shall, in no case, exceed one-fourth of the total value of such buildings, and of the ground on which they stand. Such sum the president and directors shall have power to pay, on the recommendation of the board, to any agent of the trustees of the said academy, who may be legally authorized by them to receive the same, the said agent executing his bond to the president and directors, with approved security, to apply the sum aforesaid to the purpose recommended by the board of public instruction.

XIII. *And be it further enacted*, That where, in any academical district, there shall be no academy in existence, or none which the board of public instruction may deem it proper to recommend to the president and directors of the literary fund, the board may accept a lot of ground of sufficient extent in their estimation, and conveniently

situated in the district for the erection of an academy for the said district: *Provided*, That along with the lot of ground there shall be subscribed, by one or more persons, bodies politic or corporate, or the payment thereof be otherwise assured, to the president and directors of the literary fund, three-fourths of the sum necessary to erect suitable buildings thereon for such academy, which sum shall in no case be computed at less than *ten* thousand dollars: and upon a legal conveyance of the said lot of ground being accepted by the president and directors of the literary fund, and their being fully assured of the payment of the sum of money aforesaid, of which they shall give information in convenient time to the board of public instruction, the board shall appoint thirteen persons residing within the said district, trustees of the academy to be erected; who shall thenceforth be deemed a body corporate, by such title as the board of public instruction may prescribe; shall have authority to elect a president and vice president from their own body, and to fill all vacancies subsequently occurring therein from death, resignation, removal from the district, inability, or any other cause; shall have authority to provide a common seal; may sue and be sued, plead and be impleaded; and shall have and enjoy all the rights and privileges of a body politic in law. They may make, alter or amend such by-laws, rules and regulations as they shall deem necessary or expedient for the government of their own body, and of the professors, teachers and pupils of the academy of which they have charge: *Provided*. The same be not inconsistent with the constitution and laws of this state or of the United States, nor with such general regulations as the board of public instruction may provide for the general government of the academies of the commonwealth. They shall, as speedily as possible, provide by contract or otherwise, for the erection of the necessary edifices for their academy, and shall appoint an agent who shall have authority to collect the several sums subscribed thereto, and shall be entitled to receive in virtue of their order upon the president and directors of the literary fund, from the unappropriated revenue of that fund, a sum equivalent to one third of the whole amount actually paid by the subscribers towards the erection of the said buildings, to be applied by the trustees to the same object in aid of the subscription aforesaid.

XIV. *And be it further enacted*, That so soon as any academy is ready for the admission of pupils, the trustees of the same may recommend to the board of public instruction any person to be a professor or teacher therein, who if approved after examination in some mode to be provided by the board shall thenceforth be regarded as a professor or teacher of such Academy, but subject to removal at the pleasure of the trustees thereof for incapacity or misconduct, or in conformity with such contract as they may make with him for his services. Any vacancy occurring from any cause among the teachers of any such Academy shall be in like manner, filled; *Provided*, That during the recess of the Board of Public Instruction, the trustees may make a temporary appointment, to be confirmed or disapproved by the Board at their next session.

XV. *And be it further enacted*, That the trustees of any academy shall have power to fix the salaries of their respective teachers, sub-

ject to the control of the Board of Public Instruction; and when any such salary shall have been fixed, the professor or teacher entitled thereto shall receive one fourth of the annual amount thereof from the president and directors of the Literary Fund, to be paid quarter yearly out of such portion of the revenue of the said Fund, as shall not be required by the claims of any primary school, at the order of the board of trustees of the academy, subscribed by the president thereof in behalf of the board.

XVI. *And be it further enacted*, That upon the preceding conditions relative to the admission of existing academies into the system of public instruction hereby created, or to the creation of new academies as part of such system, the Board of Public Instruction and the president and directors of the Literary Fund are authorized to accept the Anne Smith Academy for the education of females, and to provide for the erection of one or more similar institutions, provided that the whole number within the Commonwealth shall not exceed three.

XVII. *And be it further enacted*, That the Board of Public Instruction shall have authority to establish within the Commonwealth three additional colleges to be denominated respectively, Pendleton, Wythe and Henry: the two first shall be located to the west of the Allegany mountain, one whereof shall be placed to the north and the other to the south of the dividing ridges of mountains which separate the head waters of the Little Kanawha and Monongalia rivers from those of the rivers Greenbrier and the Great Kanawha; and the third shall be established in some one of the following counties, below the Blue Ridge, viz. Madison, Culpepper, Fauquier, Prince William or Loudoun.

XVIII. In determining on the position of any of the said colleges, the board shall take into consideration, along with a due regard to the health, plenty, and economy or cheapness of living of the county in which such college is proposed to be established, the sums of money, tracts or parcels of land or other property in possession or reversion which any individual or individuals, body politic or corporate, may actually subscribe in favour of any particular site therefor: and no place shall be selected by the board for any such purpose until a lot of twenty-five acres of ground shall have been offered, and the sum of thirty thousand dollars shall have been subscribed for the purpose of erecting a college thereupon, and the sum of five thousand dollars for the purchase of a library and apparatus for the endowment of such college, when the edifices thereof shall have been erected.

XIX. *And be it further enacted*, That so soon as the Board of Public Instruction shall have agreed upon a proper site for any one of the colleges aforesaid, they shall design proper plans for the structure thereof and they shall appoint twenty-five trustees of such college, who shall, at their first meeting, elect a president and vice-president from their own body and thereafter be styled the president and trustees of the college of Pendleton, Wythe, or Henry (as the case be) in which name, they shall have a common seal, and perpetual succession: shall be capable of suing and being sued, pleading and being impleaded, and shall have and enjoy all the rights and privileges of a corporation. A majority of the said trustees shall constitute a board

for the transaction of business and shall have every power in relation to their own proceedings, to the erection of the public edifices of their respective colleges, the appointment and removal of their professors and teachers, and the instruction and discipline of the students of such college as the trustees of the several academies aforesaid are empowered to exercise in relation to their respective academies, and to make such rules and regulations relative to all or any of these subjects as may seem to them expedient; provided they are not inconsistent with the constitution and laws of this State or of the United States, nor with such general regulations as the Board of Public Instruction may provide for the general government of the several colleges of this Commonwealth.

XX. *And be it further enacted*, That as soon as the president and directors of the Literary Fund shall have received a legal conveyance of the tract or parcel of land on which the said college is about to be erected, they shall have authority, and are required to subscribe towards the erection of the necessary buildings thereupon, a sum equivalent to one fourth of that otherwise subscribed as aforesaid, to be paid out of such part of the revenue of the Literary Fund, as shall remain, after providing for the primary schools and academies aforesaid, upon condition that of the sum so subscribed, the said president and directors shall pay no greater proportion at any time than shall have been actually paid by the other subscribers thereto of the whole sum by them subscribed in money. All sums called for in virtue of any such subscription, shall be paid to the order of the board of trustees of any such college, subscribed by the president of the board in behalf thereof.

XXI. *And be it further enacted*, That at the like periods and upon the like evidence with those provided by the section of this act for the salaries of the professors or teachers of any academy, the President and Directors of the Literary Fund shall pay out of the unappropriated revenue of the fund, one fifth part of the salaries of the professors and teachers of such college.

XXII. *And be it further enacted*, That in like manner and under like provisions in all respects the other colleges provided for by this act shall be established.

XXIII. *And be it further enacted*, That the Board of Public Instruction shall have authority to receive from the trustees or visitors of the existing colleges of William and Mary Hampden Sydney, and Washington, any proposals which they may deem it proper to submit to the Board, for the purpose of having their respective institutions embraced within the system of public education to be created by this act: and in the event of such agreement being made between the trustees, or visitors of any one or all of the said colleges and the Board of Public Instruction, the former shall be entitled to the same provision for their respective professors and teachers which this act assures to the professors and teachers of the colleges to be created in pursuance thereof.

XXIV. The Board of Public Instruction shall, as soon as practicable, fix upon a proper site for the University of Virginia, in determining which, the Board shall take into consideration along with all those circumstances which appertain to the location of the several

colleges aforesaid, the relation of the University to the geographical centre of the Commonwealth and to the principal channels of intercourse through its territory. They shall locate the University therefore at some place between the Blue Ridge and Allegany mountains, not more than three miles from the great valley road leading from Winchester to Abingdon, nor further north on the same than Woodstock, nor south than Fincastle, having reference in choosing a position on this line to the terms which any individual or association of individuals, body politic or corporate, may offer to them as an inducement to prefer any particular point: *provided*, that the lot of ground on which the public edifices of the University may be erected, shall not be less in extent than fifty acres. The board of public works shall design all the plans of the various edifices which may be erected thereupon, and contract for the building thereof; but no part thereof shall be begun until the lot aforesaid shall have been legally conveyed to the president and directors of the Literary Fund, nor until one hundred thousand dollars shall have been subscribed to defray the expense of the said buildings, and ten thousand dollars for the purchase of a library and philosophical apparatus for the said University. Such subscriptions may be of lands, stock or other property held in possession reversion or remainder, and shall be, with all other subscriptions provided for by this act, made transferrable or payable to the president and directors of the Literary Fund, for such use as the subscribers shall severally make known at the time of subscribing.

XXV. *And be it further enacted.* That to develope the resources of the Commonwealth for the several objects provided for by this Act; the county and corporation courts within the same, are authorized and required to appoint at their next March term three or more commissioners from among the most industrious and patriotic citizens within their respective counties and corporations, to make personal application to all the inhabitants thereof for subscriptions towards the establishment of the primary schools, academies, colleges and university proposed to be created under this Act. The commissioners shall return the original subscription lists to their respective county or corporation courts, and a certified copy thereof to the President and Directors of the Literary Fund: who shall cause their secretary to make proper abstracts therefrom, showing the amount subscribed to each of the objects aforesaid, and the names of the several subscribers, and the sums respectively subscribed by them; a copy of which abstracts he shall transmit to the Board of Public Instruction for the information thereof. In the minutes of the proceedings of the Board of Public Instruction, and of the trustees of the several colleges, academies and primary schools, the names of the subscribers to the foundation thereof shall be carefully inscribed with the sums subscribed by each opposite thereto, as a perpetual memorial of the persons who shall have contributed to promote the diffusion of knowledge throughout the Commonwealth.

XXVI. *And be it further enacted*, That the trustees of all the primary schools, Academies and Colleges, shall annually by the first day of August of each year report to the Board of Public Instruction the actual condition of their respective schools, academies and col-

leges. In these reports, the name of the school derived from the township or ward; of the academy with the number of the academical districts in which it is situated: and of the college, shall be denoted. also the number and denomination of the teachers or professors, the number and ages of the pupils or students in such school, academy or college, the extent of the library, if any, attached thereto, the cost or value, and state of repair of the several edifices devoted to literature, and such other general remarks as may serve to show the progress or declension of the several primary schools, academies, and colleges. Out of these reports, the Board of Public Instruction shall annually compile, and submit to the General Assembly, at, or near the commencement of their annual session, a view of the state of public education, within the Commonwealth, embracing a history of the progress, or declension of the University of Virginia in the year next preceding and illustrating its actual condition and future prospects.

XXVII. *And be it further enacted*, That the President and Directors of the Literary Fund shall continue, as heretofore, under the protection of the General Assembly, the depositary and guardian of that fund, and to them all conveyances shall be made of property presented to or purchased for the use of the Literary Fund.

XXVIII. *And be it further enacted*, That all acts and parts of acts coming within the purview of this act, shall be, and the same are hereby repealed.

XXIX. This act shall commence and be in force from and after the passage thereof.

[Copied, except the sums in the blanks, from an original printed for the house of delegates of Virginia.]

The part of the former resolution, denominating and providing for the erection of the University of Virginia, has been since executed; at such cost, however, to the literary fund of the state, as to impair, very much, its ability to sustain a system of primary schools, coextensive with the territory and the wants of the commonwealth. Whatever errors may have been committed in the location of the university, and in the structure of its edifices, should give place to zeal for its ultimate success in which every state of this union has an interest as well as Virginia. To the other parts of the present system for her elementary instruction, a hope may be rationally indulged, that when time shall disclose their defects, the wisdom of her legislature will not be backward in devising for them suitable remedies.

NOTE XIX.

The importance of detaining a child near his mother's side and beneath his paternal roof, until his moral principles are firmly establish-

ed may be questioned, but will not be considered as overrated by those who have witnessed how soon their premature separation impairs the force of filial piety. Although improved, sometimes, in his understanding, as regards his future happiness, it is a poor atonement to the parent, or the child himself, that the current of domestic affection, in the latter, has been suspended or perverted. Parental and filial love constitute the best nutriment of public as well as all other private virtues

May not these conclusions derive a confirmation, from the comparative effects of the public education of the two most distinguished ancient states? If the Athenian science and literature surpassed the Roman, the public and private morality of Rome, in her purest age, surpassed still more that of Athens where women were degraded, and the pupil was early torn from his mother's side, to be accomplished in gymnastic exercises by one teacher, and in his understanding by another, till Asiatic manners, the age of Aspasia and of corruption, perverted the influence of the sex in the moment of its enlargement.

If the study of the Greek and Roman classics could make a part of the occupation of the primary school, or if that be impracticable without too great expense, ~~let it~~ be deferred to a later period of life than that at which it is now pursued, the term of instruction in the elementary schools might be yet further prolonged, or made to reach the commencement of the collegiate course, and the academy could then be dispensed with altogether; or rather, each primary school would be also an academy.

Without at all questioning the utility of a knowledge of the dead languages, as comprising the chief elements of our vernacular tongue, supplying the best models of literary composition, and the best guides to universal grammar and criticism, it may be doubted, whether regarded in the latter aspects, they should be considered as furnishing, a subject of study peculiarly adapted to the first years of application, or be postponed till the further developement of the understanding, the affections, and the taste, by a knowledge more easily comprehended, and acquired in boyhood.

The experience of Greece, indeed, those very models of history, philosophy, criticism, eloquence and poetry, must demonstrate to the present, and, so long as they survive, to all future time, that the first years, or even the greater part of youth, may be usefully occupied by other studies than those of foreign, and especially of dead languages, of which Greece cultivated none; and our own experience must teach us, that there are few mental occupations so little attractive, and at the same time, so arduous, as the study of the mere

grammar of any language, but especially of one of such complex structure as the Latin. May it not be asserted that the application of Latin syntax to the construction of Latin poetry, requires as much labour of memory, and reason too, as the study of Locke on the Human Understanding; its partial abridgment in the logic of Duncan, or of Blair's or Kaims' Elements of Criticism? What mere boys commonly understand of the beauties, or gather of the spirit of Horace or Juvenal, may be inferred from our own recollection, or learnt by attending to the translation of those Roman poets, by nine-tenths of those youth, in whose hands they are now thus early placed. It has been suggested, with philosophical ingenuity, by an eminent professor, that a distribution of the study of the dead languages should be made into their vocabularies and their structure, sentiment and learning, so as to give proper offices for the memory, reason, taste and judgment. The first should be the labour of childhood; the last of more advanced youth.

NOTE XX.

The division of the territory of a state into townships has been found to be as instrumental to the improvement of its roads and bridges, as to the proper administration of its schools.

NOTE XXI.

In the first section of the seventh article of the constitution of Pennsylvania, it is expressly required to provide by law for the establishment of schools throughout the state, in such manner as that the poor may be taught *gratis*.

The legislature accordingly passed, in 1824, a general act on this subject, to be submitted to the people for their approbation. In the event of the acceptance of its provisions, three "schoolmen" are to be elected by each township, ward or borough, to serve for three years, as soon as it can be assured by the election in the first year; of one for a single year, and another for but two years, that ever after, one vacancy only shall arise and be filled in each year. They are required to make a list of all such children, within their respective townships, wards or boroughs, as are between six and fourteen years of age, whose parents or guardians are too poor to educate them, and to send them to the most convenient school, supplying them, at the same time, with books and stationary.

Although this will [redacted] be a defective system, inasmuch as it does not secure many of the most valuable benefits of a system of popular education, applicable alike to the children of all, it is probable that in the large cities, it will prove, in execution, better than it appears in theory.

In Philadelphia, as in New-York, a laudable spirit has recently prevailed, in relation to institutions for public education. The children of the Sunday schools daily multiplying, in the former, number already more than eleven thousand; and those schools are so conducted as to prove of inestimable value to the morals as well as the intelligence of the youth they comprehend among their pupils.

A house of refuge, also, exists in Philadelphia, as well as in New-York, for the reformation of juvenile offenders, who are thus humanely and wisely separated from old and hardened offenders. In that of New-York, two mistakes seem to have been committed: all delinquents are included in the class of juvenile offenders, who are under twenty-one years of age, and among them the abandoned and forlorn children of poverty, who are simply objects of humane commiseration, are classed with those, whose confinement is a punishment for crime. The institution is, in all other respects, admirably arranged and conducted; and the most interesting of all the establishments of that growing commercial metropolis of the United States.

The high schools of both these cities, in which the monitorial and Lancasterian system of education, is carried far beyond its former limits, and is aided by the prelections of able teachers, numerous tables, maps and pictures, and proper text books, are institutions calculated to put to the test of experiment many new principles, in the unsettled science, if that appellation may be allowed it, of public instruction. Over that for boys, in New York, Doctor John Griscom presides; the author of those highly interesting and valuable travels entitled "A year in Europe;" and it is said that he is amply rewarded, both by the success and the profit attending his useful labours, for the ability with which he conducts them.

NOTE XXII.

About fifteen years ago the muster fines levied in Virginia, for the preceding ten years, were submitted in one table to the house of delegates, and printed for the use of the members. The fines of that period amounted to half a million of dollars, or $50,000 a year.

NOTE XXIII.

To the Naval Schools of practice in France, was attached a corvette, which was ordered to be annually equipped for different expeditions, with students on board, who were under a skilful naval commander, with the aid of able seamen, to be instructed in rigging and unrigging a vessel, in repairing the accidents of a voyage or an engagement at sea, and in all the duties of mariners.

The students were not admitted into these schools until a previous examination had ascertained their proficiency in arithmetic, algebra, geometry, statics and navigation.

It is objected to a union of the naval and military schools in one, that the pupils will quarrel with each other, and duels will be common among them. This supposes that they have been already designated for distinct professions. which, from the nature of their common studies would be unnecessary, till about to be separated for their respective schools of practice, when this danger would of course cease altogether, if it had ever before existed. It is more than probable that the very opposite result would happen, and some of the evils remedied, which now often occur in actual service, from the jealousies of naval and military commanders required to act in concert.

One great advantage that might be expected to result from the union of all the pupils educated for defensive purposes at West Point, would be, that they would all partake of the admirable spirit of improvement already prevalent there, which it is more easy to preserve than to create any where, but which is there promoted by that topography of the adjacent country, which cuts off from the military academy every avenue to dissipation and vice. No schools whatever, of practice, are yet provided for military or naval students. The very healthy and almost equally insulated points comprising the defences of the entrance of the Chesapeake, have been recommended for this purpose ; fortresses Monroe and Calhoun; the former on the main land, at Point Comfort, the other on the recently formed island opposite to the point. Better situations could not be well chosen, because they are nearly central to the Atlantic frontier of the United States, and the strongest military fortification upon the coast, and one of the best naval stations. Yards and depots would be in the immediate vicinity of the schools. and ~~serve as~~ an apparatus and models to illustrate the arts of attack and defence in all their modes of operation, as well as the structure of the fortress and of the ship of war.

NOTE XXIV.

New Jersey created her school fund in 1819, of certain United States turnpike and bank stocks, one-tenth of the state tax of 1819, computed at $8000, the proceeds of the sale of a banking house in the city of Jersey, and of all future appropriations, gifts and legacies. It amounted, exclusive of the two last items, to about $100,000. In the last seven years something less than that amount has been added to it Its income does not probably exceed ten thousand dollars a year, and an age must elapse before it will suffice for the accomplishment of its purpose.

There does seem in the present fluctuation and uncertainty of the value of bank stocks, some hazard in vesting a perpetual fund in such *securities*, if, indeed, they may be so called. Another subject of investiture, of simple management and free from hazard, would be found in the canal stocks of this and the other states. Such an investiture would be attended with this advantage, that when foreign war, or the derangements from any other cause, of external commerce, embarrassed the operations or endangered the safety of the banks, internal trade supplying the place of foreign, would render the canal more productive. This would especially apply to a canal connecting the Raritan and the Delaware.

If New Jersey, therefore, chose, at once, to create an adequate school fund, she would have only to subscribe its amount to the stock of that canal, with such shares as the states of Pennsylvania and New York might subscribe, along with the United States, being sufficient together for its *prompt* completion, *on a scale suited to its object;* and borrowing the amount of her subscription, she might provide for the annual payment of the interest, and the gradual discharge of the principal of the debt thus contracted out of her present school fund. and a part of her annual revenue; reserving the dividends upon the canal stock to lay the foundation and to commence the operation of her system of elementary instruction, as soon as the canal shall be completed, which ought not to occup more than three years.

NOTE XXV.

Robert Y. Forsyth, the elder son of Major Forsyth, the first Marshal of Georgia, and brother of the late American Minister to Spain, died of the yellow fever at Savannah in the autumn of 1797. He was the competitor of William Gaston of North Carolina, late a member of the House of Representatives, and of Philip C. Pendleton

of Virginia, late a federal district judge, for the first honor in the class which graduated at Princeton the preceding year, at the annual commencement of which he pronounced the valedictory oration.

He was the best public speaker who had been in the college of New Jersey for many years, and he has not perhaps often been since surpassed. He was also distinguished for every moral grace and virtue; and was alike esteemed and beloved by all who knew him; and by no one more truly than by him, who having been, along with the present Bishop of New York, his room-mate, has now the melancholy pleasure of rendering this poor tribute to his memory.

NOTE XXVI.

John Watson, of Pennsylvania, in the estimation of the whole college, deserved to be regarded as the first scholar in the class which graduated in the year 1797, of which Dr Frederick Beasley of North Carolina, the present Provost of the University of Pennsylvania, Joseph Alston, late Governor of South Carolina, George M Troup, the present Governor of Georgia, Henry Edwards, Senator of Connecticut, James Clark of North Carolina, and Thomas Bayley of Maryland, late members of the House of Representatives, and Richard Rush, late Minister to London, and now Secretary of the Treasury, were fellow students. Among these and many other competitors, the merit of Watson rose above all public distinctions; and he declined being a candidate for any college honor. It would be no easy task to do full justice to the worth, both moral and intellectual, which this gentleman possessed; who, from being a poor orphan boy, and the bar-keeper of a tavern, became the president of a college in Pennsylvania, which he contributed to found, and died twenty-four years ago, literally a martyr to the learning which he cultivated. He was the Kirk White of Nassau Hall.

Born to poverty, in order to defray the expense of his education, he taught the grammar school, at the same time that he regularly recited and maintained the first standing in his class, and acquired a modern language, not included among its studies.

The homage here paid to his various and exalted worth, the object of almost universal reverence while he lived, will not seem exaggerated to those who will read the annexed letter from the president of the college of New Jersey, who knew him well from his youth, to the hour which robbed his native state, his friends and country, of his many virtues and increasing usefulness.

Baltimore, Md. November 5th, 1826.

TO THE REV. DR. JAMES CARNAHAN.

My Dear Sir—Having referred to my deceased class-mate, Mr. John Watson, in a discourse which I had lately the honor of pronouncing in your presence, it would be gratifying to me, and I hope, not an unpleasing task to you, to add to the imperfect eulogy which I have made on our long departed friend, such further notice of the singular incidents of his early life as your recollection can supply.

Such a life, it seems to me, should be borne in remembrance, for the sake of our Alma Mater, who kindly nurtured all its excellent qualities, and as a useful example to her younger sons; for I do not think that I have, in the brief narra ive to which your answer with this request will be annexed. magnified the estimation in which Mr. Watson was held by all his fellow students, as well as by the faculty and trustees of Nassau Hall.

The discourse, of which I have, not without reluctance, furnishe at the request of the societies, a copy for publication, was prompted by a faint hope, that a discussion of its leading topics might prove of some practical benefit; and I am very confident that to those who may honor it with a perusal, it will present no subject so interesting as you may render the reference extorted from me, in composing it, to one who, while living, ever undervalued a merit that we delighted to honor, and which now, that he is gone, I am sure you will concur with me in thinking I have not exaggerated.

With high esteem, I am, dear Sir,
Your friend and faithful servant,
C. F. MERCER.

TO THE HON. FENTON MERCER.

Princeton, Nov. 15, 1826.

Dear Sir,

Agreeably to your request, I communicate to you a few singular incidents in the early life of our long departed friend John Watson illustrative of his ardent desire of knowledge, and of the difficulties he overcame in attaining his eminence in literature and science.

John Watson was descended of poor but reputable parents, west of the mountains in Pennsylvania. His parents taught him to read at an early age, and my impression is. that he never went regularly to school, or if he did, it was fo a very short period. He did not recollect that he had any uncommon attachment to books, until when

about six or seven years old, his father made him a present of a tale or novel, I think it was Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield. He immediately commenced the reading, and became so interested in the story, that, if permitted, he would have read all night. From that period, his desire to read and to obtain knowledge was insatiable. His father cherished his desire of improvement by furnishing books, chiefly on geography and history.

When our friend was about nine years of age he was deprived of his father, who lost his life by a fall from his horse. Whether his mother died before this period, or was left in such destitute circumstances that she was unable to provide for the support of her son, I do not recollect. Young Watson had no relatives west of the mountains. Of his father's family I know nothing. His mother's resided near Cranberry, in this state.

The orphan boy was taken into the family of his father's friend, fed and clothed and required to perform such services as he was capable of rendering. The lady with whom he lived, had a handsome collection of books, and especially of novels, of which she was a great reader. She soon discovered that Watson was at every leisure moment reading these fictions. Whether she thought they were improper books for a boy of his age, or that his reading occupied too much of his time, is uncertain. She forbade him touching her novels. He wished to be obedient to a lady who, in every other respect, used him kindly, but he could not resist his desire to read. He secretly took her books, and concealing them in private places read them by stealth. This stratagem was discovered, the book-case was locked, and the key securely kept. Mortified and miserable, Watson lay awake whole nights thinking about the books, and devising means to obtain them. His mistress, (for so she may be called) he knew, was inexorable on this subject To use stratagem again, he thought wrong and dangerous. When in this state of mind he found a key, and it occurred to him that it might possibly open the book-case. In her absence, agitated by fear lest he should not succeed, and by a sense of guilt, believing he was doing a wicked thing, he made the experiment, and was successful. He took out a volume, read and returned it again when he found the lady was absent, and took another. This practice he continued until he had read every book in the closet. Watson, you know, was one of the most conscientiously honest men that ever breathed, and he said and I fully believe his declaration) that this was the only theft he ever committed. It is not distinctly recollected whether he remained in the same family where the incident related occurred, or removed to another place. I can only say that the facts which follow are substantially correct.

The gentleman with whom he lived keeping a tavern and retail store, taught him writing and arithmetic, in order that he might be a useful assistant in his business. As soon as capable of service, Watson was employed in the store and in the bar-room, as circumstances required Still his beloved books occupied his attention at every leisure moment. Addison's Spectator fell into his hands, and was read with great delight. But prefixed to each number he usually found a Latin sentence which he could not understand. This was a source of great mortification, and excited an intense desire to learn Latin. About this time, when perhaps he was eleven or twelve years old, he got possession of a copy of Horace and an old broken Latin Dictionary, and with these instruments, without a grammar or any other aid, he commenced learning Latin. By unremitted diligence and vast labour he became able to understand a great part of that difficult author.

While he was thus employed, Alexander Addison, then President of the Court of Common Pleas in the western district of Pennsylvania, lodged at the public house were Watson lived, and returning to his lodgings one night at a late hour, after the familiy had retired to rest, he found the young bar-keeper reading Horace by fire light. Entering into familiar conversation with Watson, he learned with surprise the study in which he was engaged and the progress he had made. Addison expressed his delight in finding the lad so laudably employed, and his regret that he was not furnished with better means of obtaining a classical education; and at the same time promised to bring him suitable books at the next session of the Court. This was the first encouraging word the orphan boy had heard respecting his studies since the death of his father. Its effect was transporting. In imagination he saw himself a learned man, able to read Latin and Greek, and every thing he wished. The ardently desired time arrived, and the judge rode up to the tavern door. Watson, anticipating the hostler, seized the horse's bridle, and at the same time cast an impatient look at the portmanteau. "I have brought you the books, my good lad," said the judge. "Never," said Watson, when relating this incident, "did I experience a more joyful moment. My heart was so full I could not utter a word." A Latin Grammar, Æsop's Fables, Selectæ Veteri Testamento, and a good Latin Dictionary, was the treasure.

Having given some general directions respecting the manner of studying the Latin Grammar, and of applying its rules in the course of reading, the judge promised to furnish such books as would be suitable at future periods. This pledge was faithfully redeemed.

Addison furnished young Watson not only with the Latin and Greek classicks, but also with such works as he judged useful on history, Belles Lettres, Natural and Moral Philosophy, Metaphysicks, and other subjects. His own library, which was extensive and well selected, as well as those of his professional brethren, were at the service of our friend until his death. Of this kindness Watson always retained the most grateful remembrance.

After he had made considerable progress in learning Latin by his own unaided efforts, he became acquainted with a boy of the same age with himself, and of similar ardour in acquiring knowledge. This boy was a regular scholar at a grammar school in the village where Watson lived. When out of school he came to Watson and read over the lesson of the preceding day, and they prepared together the task of that which followed. After some time spent in this manner, the teacher of the school offered his assistance, and invited Watson, whenever he had a leisure hour, to come to the school and recite with his young friend. Of this privilege he availed himself when an opportunity offered. In this manner he became one of the most thorough Latin and Greek scholars that I ever knew. I must not here omit to mention an act of imprudence often lamented, and probably the cause of our friend's premature death. He and his companion became so deeply interested in their studies, that three or four hours was the longest time they usually permitted themselves to sleep each night. And that they might not feel drowsy they agreed to eat sparingly of light food. Under this severe regimen and intense application to study, at unseasonable hours, their strength began to fail. Having read in some book that the cold bath would invigorate weak constitutions, they rose at day break, gave each other a shower with cold water immediately from the pump. On Watson the effect was fatal. He was seized with a chill. A pain in his breast and a cough succeeded, from which he was never wholly exempt during the remainder of his life.

Until he was about nineteen years of age he remained in his station at the counter and in the bar-room, improving himself at every leisure moment in the ancient classicks, and in various branches of literature and science. At this period his attainments and worth became known, and through the influence of the Rev. John M'Millan, D. D. he was appointed usher in the academy of Canonsburg. Here in the autumn of 1793, I became acquainted with this amiable and in many respects extraordinary man. He was my first tutor when I commenced the study of the Latin language. In this occupation he remained eighteen months. And his venerable patron believing him worthy the best

advantages our country afforded, procured him a place on the Leslie Fund, in the College of New Jersey. The sum received from this fund not being fully sufficient to pay boarding and college charges, the balance and what was necessary for clothing, books, and contingent expenses, Father M'Millan, (for I know no other name more appropriate than that by which he is usually called in the West of Pennsylvania,) generously offered to pay from his own resources. Having mentioned this eminently good man, now near eighty years of age, I cannot refrain from saying, that he has aided in educating more young men than any other individual in the United States. Living in patriarchal simplicity, he has been able for more than fifty years to contribute largely to this important object. In order to relieve his benevolent and liberal patron from this expense, John Watson, as you know, took charge of the Grammar school in the college, and at the same time recited in his class. I need not mention to you his standing as a scholar in the college, nor his amiable disposition, conciliatory manners, unblemished morals and unaffected piety. With his eminence in all these respects you are well acquainted. Although our lamented friend had made high attainments in literature and science before he entered college, I doubt whether any individual has derived more advantage from a college life. He was prepared to receive the benefits which the institution afforded. He formed regular and systematic habits of study. He became acquainted with his own powers. He learned perfectly many things of which, as he was accustomed to say, he had previously only a *smattering*. On returning to his native state, greatly improved in the opinion of all who knew him, he was immediately chosen principal of the academy at Canonsburg; and soon after by an able and powerful appeal to the Legislature he obtained the charter of Jefferson College.

To those who were not personally acquainted with this uncommon man, I would hardly dare to say how highly I estimate his literary and scientific attainments. I know he could translate with facility French, Spanish and Italian; that he was a good Hebrew and Arabic scholar; that he had collected and written in short hand copious materials for a large work which he intended, if his life had been prolonged, to prepare for the press.

Permit me to add, that to me there always appeared something very peculiar in the mental character of this man. Although his early education was so irregular, and he had read so many and so various books, there was nothing confused and heterogeneous in his mind on any subject. His knowledge was not a mere historical detail of the opinions of others. His own sentiments, which were definite and fixed,

he could unfold in language simple, clear, forcible, and not unfrequently elegant. He often said his memory was very deficient and treacherous. And if by a good memory we understand the power of recollecting words that have little or no connexion, or of repeating the precise language of a speaker or writer, his remark was in some degree true. In these respects he possessed no uncommon faculty. But in remembering facts, arguments, and the substance of any thing he had read or heard, I never knew his superior. His intellectual furniture seemed to be arranged and classed in a manner so orderly, that he could without effort seize analogies fit to illustrate his meaning, and recur to principles and facts necessary to complete his argument. At about the age of thirty years our lamented friend, possessing a mind pure, vigorous and enlightened, and a heart affectionate, benevolent and pious, was removed to a better world, esteeming in death, as he had long done in life, the simple truths of the gospel of infinitely more value than all human science.

With high esteem, I am, dear Sir,
Your friend and obedient servant,

JAMES CARNAHAN.

Corrections

In consequence of the proof sheets not having been subjected to the inspection of the author, some mistakes have occurred in the printing. The following, it is believed, are among the most important:

Page 10. After the word 'indicia,' there should be a semicolon.
22. For 'extemporary,' read cotemporary.
23. For the sentence, "How liable to accidental disturbance this security," &c. Read—How long this security may endure, and how ineffectual it must ultimately prove, we need not inquire, if ignorant and vicious, as well as poor and miserable, the sentiments of envy and hatred, mingle, in the many, amidst the daily ostentation of wealth by the few, with the cravings of unsatisfied appetite and the cry of hopeless misery.
23. Instead of a comma after the word 'begun,' on the last line, there should be a mark of a period, and the next sentence should commence thus—"The edifice of society totters and falls to the earth."
30. For "enforced," read "inferred."
42. For "derive satisfaction," read, "derive any satisfaction."
p. 46 42. For "the schools of Prussia," read, "the Trivial schools of Prussia."
64. The asterisk on this page was intended to refer to Note xxi.
68. There should be no reference to a note on this page.
81. The comma after the word 'respect,' in the first line, should be omitted.

ERRATA IN THE DISCOURSE.

In the 5th line of the 10th page, after the word "indicia," insert a semicolon.
3d line from the bottom of the 13th page, for "brighten," read *brightens.*
7th line do 22d p., for "extemporary," read *cotemporary.*
From the 9th line of the 30th page, strike out "far," after *not.*
In the 20th line of the 28th page, for "to," read *in.*
5th line of the 31st page, for "remedy against," read *security from.*
3d line from the bottom of the 31st page, insert, after "reverence," a comma.
6th line do 38th page, for "heavy," read *heavily.*
2d line do do for "converse with," read *interrogate.*
5th line of the 39th page, for "the," read *their.*
2d from the bottom of the 40th, for "sold," read *told.*
19th line of the 41st page, for "knew," read *know.*
2d line of the 45th page, insert *own* before "country."
9th line of the same, transpose "him" from after "with" to before "along."
18th line of the 47th page, for "were," read *was.*
16th line of the 48th page, for "special," read *Special.*
18th line of the 54th page for "ion," read *tion.*
8th line of the 57th page, for "the," read her *poor.*
2d line of the 59th page, for "or," read *and.*
23d line of the 83d page, strike out "foul."
7th line from the end of the Discourse, for "terminate," read *close.*

ERRATA IN THE APPENDIX.

In the 3d line from the bottom of the 3d page, the first of the printed notes, insert *not* before "be."
10th line of the 4th page, for "render," read *rendering.*
4th line from the bottom of this page, for "effusion," read *diffusion.*
2d line of the 2d note, for "were," read *was.*
11th line from the end of 7th note, for "agriculturalists," read *agriculturalist.*
18th line of the 10th page, for "incestuous by," read *incestuously.*
1st line of the 16th page, for "age," read *ages.*
2d line from the bottom of the 16th page, for "the," read *this Commonwealth.*
12th line do do for "same," read *seem.*
13th do do for "increases," read *exceeds.*
6th do do for "of," read *time.*
10th line of the 19th page, for "in," read *on.*
20th line of the 30th page, strike out "let it."
21st do do read *the*, for "The," and substitute a comma for the preceding period.
3d line from the bottom of the 31st page, for "where," read *whose.*
1st line of the 32d page, strike out "prove to."
8th line of the same page, after the word "farmer," insert a comma.
6th line from the bottom of the 33d page, insert *constitute*, after "and."
3d line from the same, for "serve as," read *supply.*
5th line from the bottom of the 34th page, for "Forsythe," read *Forsyth.*

Many of the preceding errors are imputable to the imperfection of a manuscript, transcribed under most unfavorable circumstances from a very imperfect original.

Note of the Author.

Date Due

FEB 26 1974			
JUL 25 1977			
FEB 15 1989